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ROBIN HOOD
BALLADS AND
SONGS.



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**ROBIN HOOD BALLADS
AND SONGS.**



1844. 2. 2

ROBIN, **H**OOD:

**BALLADS AND SONGS RELATING TO THAT
CELEBRATED OUTLAW; WITH
ANECDOTES OF HIS
LIFE.**

FROM RITSON AND OTHERS.



LONDON:
BELL AND DALDY, 186, FLEET STREET,
AND SAMPSON LOW, SON, AND CO.
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THE LIFE OF ROBIN HOOD.

BY JOSEPH RITSON.

IT will scarcely be expected that one should be able to offer an authentic narrative of the life and transactions of this extraordinary personage. The times in which he lived, the mode of life he adopted, and the silence or loss of contemporary writers, are circumstances sufficiently favourable indeed to romance, but altogether inimical to historical truth. The reader must, therefore, be contented with such a detail, however scanty or imperfect, as a zealous pursuit of the subject enables one to give; and which, though it may fail to satisfy, may possibly serve to amuse. No assistance has been derived from the labours of his professed biographers; and even the industrious Sir John Hawkins, from whom the public might have expected ample gratification upon the subject, acknowledges that "the history of this popular hero is but little known; and all the scattered fragments concerning him, could they be brought together, would fall far

short of satisfying such an inquirer as none but real and authenticated facts will content. We must," he says, "take his story as we find it." He accordingly gives us nothing but two or three trite and trivial extracts, with which every one, at all curious about the subject, was as well acquainted as himself. It is not, at the same time, pretended that the present attempt promises more than to bring together the scattered fragments to which the learned historian alludes. This, however, has been done according to the best of the compiler's information and abilities; and the result is, with a due sense of the deficiency of both, submitted to the reader's candour.

ROBIN HOOD was born at Locksley, in the county of Nottingham, in the reign of King Henry the Second, and about the year of Christ 1160. His extraction was noble, and his true name Robert Fitzooth, which vulgar pronunciation easily corrupted into Robin Hood. He is frequently styled, and commonly reputed to have been, Earl of Huntingdon; a title to which, in the latter part of his life at least, he actually appears to have had some sort of pretension. In his youth he is reported to have been of a wild and extravagant disposition, insomuch that, his inheritance being consumed or forfeited by his excesses, and his person outlawed for debt, either from necessity or choice, he sought an asylum in the woods and forests, with which immense tracts, especially in the northern parts of the kingdom, were at that time covered.

Of these he chiefly affected Barnsdale, in Yorkshire; Sherwood, in Nottinghamshire; and, according to some, Plompton-park, in Cumberland. Here he either found, or was afterwards joined by, a number of persons in similar circumstances;

“Such as the fury of ungovern’d youth
Thrust from the company of awful men;”

who appear to have considered and obeyed him as their chief or leader, and of whom his principal favourites, or those in whose courage and fidelity he most confided, were Little John (whose surname is said to have been Nailor), William Scadlock (Scathelock, or Scarlet), George à Green, pinder (or pound-keeper), of Wakefield, Much; a miller’s son, and a certain monk or friar, named Tuck. He is likewise said to have been accompanied in his retreat by a female, of whom he was enamoured, and whose real or adopted name was Marian.

His company, in process of time, consisted of a hundred archers; “men,” says Major, “most skilful in battle, whom four times that number of the boldest fellows durst not attack.” His manner of recruiting was somewhat singular; for, in the words of an old writer, “whersoever he hard of any that were of unusual strength and ‘hardines,’ he would desgyse himselfe, and, rather then fayle, go lyke a begger to become acquaynted with them; and, after he had tryed them with fyghting; never give them over tyl he had used meansto drawe [them] to lyve after his fashion:” a practice of which numerous instances are recorded

in the more common and popular songs, where, indeed, he seldom fails to receive a sound beating. In shooting with the long bow, which they chiefly practised, "they excelled all the men of the land; though, as occasion required, they had also other weapons." In these forests, and with this company, he for many years reigned like an independent sovereign; at perpetual war, indeed, with the king of England and all his subjects, with an exception, however, of the poor and needy, and such as were "desolate and oppressed," or stood in need of his protection. When molested by a superior force in one place, he retired to another, still defying the power of what was called law and government, and making his enemies pay dearly, as well for their open attacks, as for their clandestine treachery. It is not, at the same time, to be concluded that he must, in this opposition, have been guilty of manifest treason or rebellion, as he most certainly can be justly charged with neither. An outlaw, in those times, being deprived of protection, owed no allegiance: "his hand 'was' against every man, and every man's hand against him." These forests, in short, were his territories; those who accompanied and adhered to him, his subjects:—

"The world was not his friend, nor the world's law;"

and what better title King Richard could pretend to the territory and people of England, than Robin Hood had to the dominion of Barnsdale or Sherwood, is a question humbly submitted to the consideration of

the political philosopher. The deer with which the royal forests then abounded (every Norman tyrant being, like Nimrod, "a mighty hunter before the Lord,") would afford our hero and his companions an ample supply of food throughout the year; and of fuel, for dressing their venison, or for the other purposes of life, they could evidently be in no want. The rest of their necessities would be easily procured, partly by taking what they had occasion for from the wealthy passenger who traversed or approached their territories, and partly by commerce with the neighbouring villages or great towns. It may be readily imagined that such a life, during great part of the year, at least, and while it continued free from the alarms or apprehensions to which our foresters, one would suppose, must have been too frequently subject, might be sufficiently pleasant and desirable, and even deserve the compliment which is paid to it by Shakespeare, in his comedy of *As you like it*, (Act I. Scene 1.,) where, on Oliver's asking, "Where will the old duke live?" Charles answers, "They say he is already in the forest of Arden, and a many merry men with him; and there they live like the old Robin Hood of England; . . . and fleet the time carelessly as they did in the golden world." Their gallant chief, indeed, may be presumed to have frequently exclaimed with the banished Valentine, in another play of the same author:—*

- *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Act V. Scene iv.

“ How use doth breed a habit in a man !
This shadowy desert, unfrequented woods,
I better brook than flourishing peopled towns.
Here can I sit alone, unseen of any,
And, to the nightingale’s complaining notes,
Tune my distresses, and record my woes.”

He would, doubtless, too often find occasion to add :—

“ What hallooing and what stir is this to-day ?
These are my mates, that make their wills their law,
Have some unhappy passenger in chace :
They love me well ; yet I have much to do
To keep them from uncivil outrages.”

But, on the other hand, it will be at once difficult and painful to conceive,—

“ ————When they did hear
The rain and wind beat dark December, how,
In that their pinching cave, they could discourse
The freezing hours away !”

Their mode of life, in short, and domestic economy, of which no authentic particulars have been even traditionally preserved, are more easily to be guessed at than described. They have, nevertheless, been elegantly sketched by the animating pencil of an excellent, though neglected poet :

“ The merry pranks he play’d, would ask an age to tell,
And the adventures strange that Robin Hood befell,
When Mansfield many a time for Robin hath been laid,
How he hath cousen’d them, that him would have betray’d ;
How often he hath come to Nottingham disguis’d,
And cunningly escap’d, being set to be surpriz’d.
In this our spacious isle, I think there is not one,
But he hath heard some talk of him and Little John ;

And to the end of time, the tales shall ne'er be done,
Of Scarlock, George a Green, and Much the miller's son,
Of Tuck the merry friar, which many a sermon made
In praise of Robin Hood, his outlaws, and their trade.
An hundred valiant men had this brave Robin Hood,
Still ready at his call, that bow-men were right good,
All clad in Lincoln Green, with caps of red and blue,
His fellow's winded horn not one of them but knew,
When setting to their lips their little beugles shrill,
The warbling ecchoes waked from every dale and hill.
Their bauldricks set with studs, athwart their shoulders cast,
To which, under their arms, their sheafs were buckled fast,
A short sword at their belt, a buckler scarce a span,
Who struck below the knee, not counted then a man :
All made of Spanish yew, their bows were wondrous strong ;
They not an arrow drew, but was a cloth-yard long.
Of archery they had the very perfect craft,
With broad arrow, or but, or prick, or roving shaft,
At marks full forty score, they us'd to prick and rove,
Yet higher than the breast, for compass never strove :
Yet at the farthest mark a foot could hardly win :
At long-outs, short, and hoyles, each one could cleave the pin :
Their arrows finely pair'd, for timber and for feather,
With birch and brazil piec'd, to fly in any weather ;
And shot they with the round, the square, or forked pile,
The loose gave such a twang, as might be heard a mile.
And of these archers brave, there was not any one,
But he could kill a deer his swiftest speed upon,
Which they did boil and roast, in many a mighty wood,
Sharp hunger the fine sauce to their more kingly food.
Then taking them to rest, his merry men and he
Slept many a summer's night under the greenwood tree.
From wealthy abbots' chests, and churls' abundant store,
What oftentimes he took, he shar'd amongst the poor :
No lordly bishop came in lusty Robin's way,
To him, before he went, but for his pass must pay :
The widow in distress he graciously reliev'd,
And remedied the wrongs of many a virgin griev'd :
He from the husband's bed no married woman wan,
But to his mistress dear, his loved Marian,

Was ever constant known, which, wheresoe'er she came,
Was sovereign of the woods ; chief lady of the game :
Her clothes tuck'd to the knee, and dainty braided hair,
With bow and quiver arm'd, she wander'd here and there
Amongst the forests wild ; Diana never knew
Such pleasures, nor such harts as Mariana slew.*

That our hero and his companions, while they lived in the woods, had recourse to robbery for their better support, is neither to be concealed nor to be denied. Testimonies to this purpose, indeed, would be equally endless and unnecessary. Fordun, in the fourteenth century, calls him, "*ille famosissimus siccarius*," that most celebrated robber ; and Major terms him and Little John, "*famatissimi latrones*." But it is to be remembered, according to the confession of the latter historian, that in these exertions of power he took away the goods of rich men only ; never killing any person, unless he was attacked or resisted : that he would not suffer a woman to be maltreated ; nor ever took anything from the poor, but charitably fed them with the wealth he drew from the abbots. "I disapprove," says he, "of the rapine of the man ; but he was the most humane and the prince of all robbers." In allusion, no doubt, to this irregular and predatory course of life, he has had the honour to be compared to the illustrious Wallace, the champion and deliverer of his country ; and that, it is not a little remarkable, in the latter's own time.

Our hero, indeed, seems to have held bishops, abbots, priests, and monks,—in a word, all the clergy, regular or secular,—in decided aversion.

* Drayton's *Polyolbion*, Song xxvi.

"These byshoppes and thyse archebyshoppes,
Ye shall them bete and bynde,"

was an injunction carefully impressed upon his followers. The abbot of Saint Mary's, in York, from some unknown cause, appears to have been distinguished by particular animosity; and the sheriff of Nottinghamshire, who may have been too active and officious in his endeavours to apprehend him, was the unremitted object of his vengeance.

Notwithstanding, however, the aversion in which he appears to have held the clergy of every denomination, he was a man of exemplary piety, according to the notions of that age, and retained a domestic chaplain (Friar Tuck, no doubt) for the diurnal celebration of the divine mysteries. This we learn from an anecdote preserved by Fordun, as an instance of those actions which the historian allows to deserve commendation. One day, as he heard mass, which he was most devoutly accustomed to do, (nor would he, in whatever necessity, suffer the office to be interrupted,) he was espied by a certain sheriff and officers belonging to the king, who had frequently before molested him, in that most secret recess of the wood where he was at mass. Some of his people, who perceived what was going forward, advised him to fly with all speed, which, out of reverence to the sacrament, which he was then most devoutly worshipping, he absolutely refused to do. But the rest of his men having fled for fear of death, Robin, confiding solely in Him whom he reverently worshipped, with a very

few, who by chance were present, set upon his enemies, whom he easily vanquished ; and, being enriched with their spoils and ransom, he always held the ministers of the church and masses in greater veneration ever after, mindful of what is vulgarly said ;

“ Him god does surely hear
Who oft to th’ mass gives ear.”

Having, for a long series of years, maintained a sort of independent sovereignty, and set kings, judges, and magistrates at defiance, a proclamation was published, offering a considerable reward for bringing him in either dead or alive ; which, however, seems to have been productive of no greater success than former attempts for that purpose. At length, the infirmities of old age increasing upon him, and desirous to be relieved, in a fit of sickness, by being let blood, he applied for that purpose to the prioress of Kirkleynunnery, in Yorkshire, his relation, (women, and particularly religious women, being, in those times, somewhat better skilled in surgery than the sex is at present,) by whom he was treacherously suffered to bleed to death. This event happened on the 18th of November, 1247, being the thirty-first year of King Henry III., and (if the date assigned to his birth be correct) about the 87th of his age. He was interred under some trees, at a short distance from the house ; a stone being placed over his grave, with an inscription to his memory.

Such was the end of Robin Hood : a man who, in a barbarous age, and under a complicated tyranny,

displayed a spirit of freedom and independence, which has endeared him to the common people, whose cause he maintained, and which will render his name immortal.

With respect to his personal character: it is sufficiently evident that he was active, brave, prudent, patient; possessed of uncommon bodily strength, and considerable military skill; just, generous, benevolent, faithful, and beloved or revered by his followers or adherents for his excellent and amiable qualities. Fordun, a priest, extols his piety. Major (as we have seen) pronounces him the most humane and the prince of all robbers; and Camden, whose testimony is of some weight, calls him "*prædonem mitissimum*," the gentlest of thieves. As proofs of his universal and singular popularity: his story and exploits have been made the subject of various dramatic exhibitions, as well as of innumerable poems, rhymes, songs, and ballads. He has given rise to divers proverbs; and to swear by him, or some of his companions, appears to have been a usual practice. His songs have been chanted on the most solemn occasions, his service sometimes preferred to the word of God. He may be regarded as the patron of archery; and, though not actually canonized, he obtained the principal distinction of sainthood in having a festival allotted to him, and solemn games instituted in honour of his memory, which were celebrated till the latter end of the sixteenth century; not by the populace only, but by kings or princes

and grave magistrates; and that as well in Scotland as in England; being considered, in the former country, of the highest political importance, and essential to the civil and religious liberties of the people, the efforts of government to suppress them frequently producing tumult and insurrection. His bow, and one of his arrows, his chair, his cap, and one of his slippers, were preserved, with peculiar veneration, till within the present century; and not only places which afforded him security or amusement, but even the well at which he quenched his thirst, still retain his name; a name which, in the middle of the present century, was conferred, as a singular distinction, upon the prime minister to the king of Madagascar.

After his death his company was dispersed. History is silent in particulars: all that we can, therefore, learn is, that the honour of Little John's death and burial is contended for by rival nations; that his grave continued long "celebrious for the yielding of excellent whetstones;" and that some of his descendants, of the name of Nailor, which he himself bore, and they from him, were in being so late as the last century.





ROBIN HOOD.

PART I.

I.

A LYTELL GESTE OF ROBYN HODE.

THIS ancient legend is printed from the copy of an edition, in 4to. and black letter, by Wynken de Worde, preserved in the public library at Cambridge: compared with, and, in some places, corrected by, another impression (apparently from the former), likewise in 4to. and black letter, by William Copland; a copy of which is among the late Mr. Garrick's old plays, now in the British Museum. The full title of the first edition is as follows:—"Here beginneth a mery geste of Robyn Hode and his meyne, and of the proude sheryfe of Notyngham;" and the printer's colophon runs thus:—"Explicit. Kynge Edward and Robyn hode & Lytell Johan Enprented at London in Flete strete at the sygne of the sone By Wynken de Worde." To Copland's edition is added "a newe playe for to be played in Maye games very pleasaunte and full of pastyme;" which will be found at large in another place. No other copy of either edition is known to be extant; but, by the favour of the Reverend Dr. Farmer, the editor had in his hands, and gave to Mr. Douce, a few leaves of an old 4to. black letter impression, by the above Wynken de Worde, probably in 1489; and totally unknown to Ames and Herbert. Another edition was printed at Edingburgh by Androw Myllar and Walter Chepman in 1508, a fragment whereof is in the Advocates' Library there. This is, probably, the edition noticed among the tales enumerated in Wedderburn's complaints of Scotland, printed at St. Andrew's, in

1549, under the title of "Robene Hude and litil. Jhone." Among the doctor's numerous literary curiosities was likewise another edition, "printed," after Copland's, "for Edward White," (4to. black letter, no date, but entered in the Stationers' books 13 May, 1594,) which hath been collated, and every variation worthy of notice either adopted or remarked in the margin. The only desertion from all the copies (except in necessary corrections) is the division of stanzas, the indenting of the lines, the addition of points, the disuse of abbreviations, and the occasional introduction or rejection of a capital letter; liberties, if they may be so called, which have been taken with most of the other poems in this collection.



LITHE and lysten, gentylmen,
That be of frebore blode;
I shall you tell of a good yemàn,
His name was Robyn Hode.

Robyn was a proude outlawe,
Whyles he walked on grounde,
So curteyse an outlawe as he was one
Was never none yfounde.

Robyn stode in Bernysdale,
And lened hym to a tree,
And by hym stode Lytell Johan,
A good yeman was he;

And also dyde good Scathelock,
And Much the miller's sone;
There was no ynche of his body,
But it was worthe a grome.

Then bespake him Lytell Johan
All unto Robyn Hode,
Mayster, yf ye wolde dyne betyme,
It wolde do you moch good.

Then bespake good Robyn,
To dyne I have no lust,
Tyll I have some bolde baron,
Or some unketh gest,

[Or els some byshop or abbot]
That may paye for the best;
Or some knyght or some squyere
That dwelleth here by west.

A good maner than had Robyn,
In londe where that he were,
Every daye or he woulde dyne
Thre messes wolde he here :

The one in the worshyp of the fader,
The other of the holy goost,
The thyrde was of our dere lady,
That he loved of all other moste.

Robyn loved our dere lady,
For doute of dedely synne ;
Wolde he never do company harme
That ony woman was ynne.

Mayster, than sayd Lytell Johan,
And we our borde shall sprede,
Tell us whether we shall gone,
And what lyfe we shall lede ;

Where we shall take, where we shall leve,
Where we shall abide behynde,
Where we shall robbe, where we shall reve,
Where we shall bete and bynde.

Ther of no fors, sayd Robyn,
We shall do well ynough ;
But loke ye do no housbonde harme
That tylleth with his plough ;

No more ye shall no good yemàn,
That walketh by grene wode shawe,
Ne no knyght, ne no squyer,
That wolde be a good felawe.

These bysshoppes, and thyse archebysshoppes,
Ye shall them bete and bynde ;
The hye sheryfe of Notynghame,
Hym holde in your mynde.

This worde shall be holde, sayd Lytyll Johan,
And this lesson shall we lere ;
It is ferre dayes, god sende us a gest,
That we were at our dynere.

Take thy good bowe in thy hande, said Robyn,
Let Moche wende with the,
And so shall Wyllyam Scathelocke,
And no man abyde with me :

And walke up to the Sayles,
And so to Watlynge-strete,
And wayte after some unketh gest,
Up-chaunce ye mowe them mete.

Be he erle or ony baròn,
Abbot or ony knyght,
Brynge hym to lodge to me,
Hys dyner shall be dyght.

They wente unto the Sayles,
 These yemen all thre,
 They loked est, they loked west,
 They myght no man see.

But as they loked in Barneysdale,
 By a derne strete,
 Then came there a knyght rydyng,
 Full sone they gan hym mete.

Alldreri then was his semblaunte,
 And lytell was hys pryde,
 Hys one fote in the sterope stode,
 That other waved besyde.

Hys hode hangynge over hys eyen two,
 He rode in symple aray;
 A soryer man than he was one
 Rode never in somers-day.

Lytell Johan was curteyse,
 And set hym on his kne:
 Welcome be ye, gentyll knyght,
 Welcome are you to me,

Welcome be thou to grene wood,
 Hende knyght and fre;
 My mayster hath abyden you fastynge,
 Syr, all these oures thre.

Who is your mayster? sayd the knyght.
 Johan sayde, Robyn Hode.
 He is a good yeman, sayd the knyght,
 Of hym I have herde moch good.

I graunte, he sayd, with you to wende,
My brethren all in-fere;
My purpose was to have deyned to day
At Blythe or Dankastere.

Forthe than went this gentyll knyght,
With a carefull chere,
The teres out of his eyen ran,
And fell downe by his lere.

They brought hym unto the lodge dore,
When Robyn gan hym se,
Full curteysly dyde of his hode,
And set hym on his kne.

Welcome, syr knyght, then said Robyn,
Welcome thou arte to me,
I haue abyde you fastynge, syr,
All these houres thre.

Then answered the gentyll knyght,
With wordes fayre and fre,
God the save, good Robyn,
And all thy fayre meynè.

They washed togyder and wyped bothe,
And set tyll theyr dynere;
Brede and wyne they had ynough,
And nombles of the dere;

Swannes and fesauntes they had full good,
And foules of the revere;
There fayled never so lytell a byrde,
That ever was bred on brere.

Do gladly, syr knyght, sayd Robyn.
Gramercy, syr, sayd he,
Suche a dyner had I not
Of all these wekes thre :

If I come agayne, Robyn,
Here by this countre,
As good a dyner I shall the make,
As thou hast made to me.

Gramercy, knyght, sayd Robyn,
My dyner whan I have,
I was never so gredy, by dere worthy god,
My dyner for to crave.

But pay or ye wende, sayd Robyn,
Me thynketh it is good ryght ;
It was never the maner, by dere worthy god,
A yeman to pay for a knyght.

I have nought in my cofers, sayd the knyght,
That I may profer for shame.
Lytell Johan, go loke, sayd Robyn,
Ne let not for no blame.

Tell me trouth, sayd Robyn,
So god have parte of the.
I have no more but ten shillings, sayd the knyght,
So god have parte of me.

Yf thou have no more, sayd Robyn,
I wyll not one peny ;
And yf thou have nede of ony more,
More shall I len thee

Go now forth, Lytell Johan,
The trouthe tell thou me,
Yf there be no more but ten shillings,
Not one peny that I se.

Lytell Johan spred downe his mantell
Full fayre upon the grounde,
And there he founde in the knyghtes cofer
But even halfe a pounce.

Lytyll Johan let it lye full styll,
And went to his mayster full lowe.
What tydyng, Johan? sayd Robyn.
“Syr, the knyght is trewe inough.”

Fyll of the best wyne, sayd Robyn,
The knyght shall begynne;
Moch wonder thynketh me
Thy clothynge is so thynne.

Tell me one worde, sayd Robyn,
And counsell shall it be;
I trowe thou were made a knyght of forse,
Or elles of yemanry;

Or elles thou hast ben a sory housband,
And leved in stroke and stryfe;
An okerer, or elles a lechoure, sayd Robyn,
With wronge hast thou lede thy lyfe.

I am none of them, sayd the knyght,
By god that made me;
An hondreth wynter here before,
Myne aunsetters knyghtes have be.

But ofte it hath befall, Robyn,
A man hath be dysgrate;
But god that syteth in heven above
May amend his state.

Within two or thre yere, Robyn, he sayd,
My neyghbores well it 'kende,'
Foure hondreth pounde of good money
Full wel than myght I spende.

Now have I no good, sayd the knyght,
But my chyl dren and my wyfe;
God hath shapen such an ende,
Tyll god 'may amende my lyfe.'

In what maner, sayd Robyn,
Hast thou lore thy richès?
For my grete foly, he sayd,
And for my kindenesse.

I had a sone, for soth, Robyn,
That sholde have ben my eyre,
When he was twenty wynter olde,
In felde wolde juste full feyre;

He slewe a knyght of Lancastshyre,
And a squyre bolde;
For to save hym in his ryght
My goodes beth sette and solde;

My londes beth set to wedde, Robyn,
Untyll a certayne daye,
To a ryche abbot here besyde,
Of Saynt Mary abbay.

What is the somme? sayd Robyn,
Trouthe than tell thou me.
Syr, he sayd, foure hondred pounce,
The abbot tolde it to me.

Now, and thou lese thy londe, sayd Robyn,
What shall fall of the?
Hastely I wyll me buske, sayd the knyght,
Over the salte see,

And se where Cryst was quykke and deed,
On the mounte of Caluarè.
Fare well, frende, and have good daye,
It may noo better be——

Teeres fell out of his eyen two,
He wolde haue gone his waye—
Farewell, frendes, and have good day,
I ne have more to pay.

Where be thy friendes? sayd Robyn.
“Syr, never one wyll me know;
Whyle I was ryche inow at home
Grete bost then wolde they blowe,

And now they renne awaye fro me,
As bestes on a rowe;
They take no more heed of me
Then they me never sawe.”

For ruthe then wepte Lytell Johan,
Scathelocke and Much ‘in fere.’
Fyll of the best wyne, sayd Robyn,
For here is a symple chere.

Hast thou ony frendes, sayd Robyn,
 Thy borowes that wyll be?
 I have none, then sayd the knyght,
 But god that dyed on a tree.

Do waye thy japes, sayd Robyn,
 Therof wyll I right none;
 Wenest thou I wyll have god to borowe?
 Peter, Poule or Johan?

Nay, by hym that me made,
 And shope both sonne and mone,
 Fynde a better borowe, sayd Robyn,
 Or mony getest thou none.

I have none other, sayd the knyght,
 The sothe for to say,
 But yf it be our dere lady,
 She fayled me never or this day.

By dere worthy god, sayd Robyn,
 To seche all Englund thorowe,
 Yet founde I never to my pay,
 A moch better borowe.

Come now forthe, Lytell Johan,
 And goo to my tresourè,
 And brynge me foure hondred pounce,
 And loke that it well tolde be.

Forthe then wente Lytell Johan,
 And Scathelocke went before,
 He tolde out foure hondred pounce,
 By eyghtene score.*

* *i. e.* By eighteen score to the hundred.

Is this well tolde ? sayd lytell Much.
Johan sayd, What greveth the ?
It is almes to helpe a gentyll knyght
That is fall in povertè.

Mayster, than sayd Lytell Johan,
His clothyng is full thynne,
Ye must gyve the knyght a lyveray,
To ' lappe ' his body ther in.

For ye have scarlet and grene, mayster,
And many a ryche aray,
There is no marchaunt in mery Englonde
So ryche, I dare well saye.

Take hym thre yerdes of every coloure,
And loke that well mete it be.
Lytell Johan toke none other mesure
But his bowe tre,

And of every handfull that he met
He lept ouer fotes thre.
What devilkyns draper, sayd litell Much,
Thynkyst thou to be ?

Scathelocke stooode full styll and lough,
And sayd, By god allmyght,
Johan may give hym the better mesure,
By god, it cost him but lyght.

Mayster, sayd Lytell Johan,
All unto Robyn Hode,
Ye must gyve that knight an hors,
To lede home al this good.

Take hym a gray courser, sayd Robyn,
And a sadell newe;
He is our ladyes messengere,
God lene that he be true.

And a good palfraye, sayd lytell Moch,
To mayntayne hym in his ryght.
And a payre of botes, sayd Scathelocke,
For he is a gentyll knyght.

Whatshalt thou gyve hym, Lytel Johan? sayd Robyn.
Syr, a payre of gylte spores clene,
To pray for all this company:
God brynge hym out of tene!

Whan shall my daye be, sayd the knyght,
Syr, and your wyll be?
This daye twelve moneth, sayd Robyn,
Under this grene wode tre.

It were grete shame, sayd Robyn,
A knyght alone to ryde,
Without squyer, yeman or page,
To walke by hys syde.

I shall the lene Lytyll Johan my man,
For he shall be thy knave;
In a yemans steed he may the stonde,
Yf thou grete nede have.

THE SECONDE FYTTE.

Nowe is the knyght went on this way,
This game he thought full good,
When he loked on Bernysdale,
He blyssed Robyn Hode ;

And whan he thought on Bernysdale,
On Scathelock, Much, and Johan,
He blyssed them for the best company
That ever he in come.

Then spake that gentyll knyght,
To Lytel Johan gan he saye,
To morowe I must to Yorke toune,
To Saynt Mary abbay ;

And to the abbot of that place
Foure hondred ponde I must pay :
And but I be there upon this nyght
My londe is lost for ay.

The abbot sayd to his covent,
There he stode on grounde,
This day twelfe moneth came there a knyght
And borrowed foure hondred ponde.

[He borrowed foure hondred ponde,]
Upon all his londe fre,
But he come this ylke day
Dysherytye shall he be.

It is full erely, sayd the pryoure,
The day is not yet ferre gone,

I had lever to pay an hondred pounde,
And lay it downe a none.

The knyght is ferre be yonde the see,
In Englonde is his ryght,
And suffreth hunger and colde
And many a sory nyght:

It were grete pytè, sayd the pryoure,
So to have his londe,
And ye be so lyght of your conseyence
Ye do to him moch wronge.

Thou arte euer in my berde, sayd the abbot,
By god and saynt Rycharde.*
With that cam in a fat-heded monke,
The heygh selerer;

He is dede or hanged, sayd the monke,
By god that bought me dere,
And we shall have to spende in this place
Foure hondred pounde by yere.

The abbot and the hy selerer,
Sterte forthe full bolde,
The high justyce of Englonde
The abbot there dyde holde.

The hye justyce and many mo
Had take into their honde,
Holy all the knyghtes det,
To put that knyght to wronge.

* Son of Lotharius, King of Kent. Saint Rycharde went to Rome, and died at Lucca, in his way homeward, about the year of Christ 750.

They demed the knyght wonder sore,
The abbot and hys meynè:
“ But he come this ylke day
Dysheryte shall he be.”

He wyll not come yet, sayd the justyce,
I dare well undertake.
But in sorowe tyme for them all
The knyght came to the gate.

Than bespake that gentyll knyght
Untyll his meynè,
Now put on your symple wedes
That ye brought fro the see.

[They put on their symple wedes,]
And came to the gates anone,
The porter was redy hymselfe,
And welcomed them everychone.

Welcome, syr knyght, sayd the portèr,
My lord to mete is he,
And so is many a gentyll man,
For the love of the.

The porter swore a full grete othe,
By god that made me,
Here be the best coresed hors
That ever yet sawe I me.

Lede them into the stable, he sayd,
That eased myght they be.
They shall not come therin, sayd the knyght,
By god that dyed on a tre.

Lordes were to mete isette
In that abbotes hall,
The knyght went forth and kneled downe,
And salved them grete and small.

Do gladly, syr abbot, sayd the knyght,
I am come to holde my day.
The fyrst word the abbot spake,
Hast thou brought my pay?

Not one peny, sayd the knyght,
By god that maketh me.
Thou art a shrewed dettour, sayd the abbot;
Syr justyce, drynke to me.

What doost thou here, sayd the abbot,
But thou haddest brought thy pay?
For god, than sayd the knyght,
To pray of a lenger daye.

Thy daye is broke, sayd the justyce,
Londe getest thou none.
“Now, good syr justice, be my frende,
And fende me of my fone.”

I am holde with the abbot, sayd the justyce,
Bothe with cloth and fee.
“Now, good syr sheryf, be my frende.”
Nay for god, sayd he.

“Now, good syr abbot, be my frende,
For thy curteysè,
And holde my londes in thy honde
Tyll I have made the gree;

And I wyll be thy true servaunte,
And trewely serve the,
Tyl ye have foure hondred ponde
Of money good and free."

The abbot sware a full grete othe,
By god that dyed on a tre,
Get the londe where thou may,
For thou getest none of me.

By dere worthy god, then sayd the knyght,
That all this worlde wrought,
But I have my londe agayne
Full dere it shall be bought;

God, that was of a mayden borne,
Lene us well to spede!
For it is good to assay a frende
Or that a man have nede.

The abbot lothely on hym gan loke
And vylaynesly hym gan 'call';
Out, he sayd, thou false knyght,
Spede the out of my hall!

Thou lvest, then sayd the gentyll knyght,
Abbot in thy hal;
False knyght was I never,
By god that made us all.

Up then stode that gentyll knyght,
To the abbot sayd he,
To suffre a knyght to knele so long,
Thou canst no curteysye;

In joustes and in tournament
Full ferre than have I be,
And put myselfe as ferre in prees
As ony that ever I se.

What wyll ye gyve more? sayd the justyce,
And the knyght shall make a releyse;
And elles dare I safly swere
Ye holde never your londe in pees.

An hondred ponde, sayd the abbot.
The justyce said, Gyve him two.
Nay, be god, sayd the knyght,
Yet gete ye it not soo :

Though ye wolde gyve a thousande more,
Yet were 'ye' never the nere;
Shall there never be myn eyre,
Abbot, justyse, ne frere.

He sterte hym to a borde anone,
Tyll a table rounde,
And there he shoke out of a bagge
Even foure hondred ponde.

Have here thy golde, syr abbot, sayd the knyght,
Which that thou lentest me;
Haddest thou ben curteys at my comynge,
Rewarde sholdest thou have be.

The abbot sat styll, and ete no more,
For all his ryall ðhere,
He cast his hede on his sholdèr,
And fast began to stare.

Take me my golde agayne, sayd the abbot,
Syr justyce, that I toke the.
Not a peny, sayd the justyce,
By god, that dyed on a tree.

“Syr abbot, and ye men of lawe,
Now have I holde my daye,
Now shall I have my londe agayne,
For aught that you can saye.”

The knyght stert out of the dore,
Awaye was all his care,
And on he put his good clothynge,
The other he lefte there.

He wente hym forthe full mery syngynge,
As men have tolde in tale,
His lady met hym at the gate,
At home in ‘Wierysdale.’

Welcome, my lorde, sayd his lady;
Syr, lost is all your good?
Be mery, dame, sayd the knyght,
And praye for Robyn Hode,

That ever his soule be in blysse,
He holpe me out of my tene;
Ne had not be his kyndenesse,
Beggars had we ben.

The abbot and I acordyd ben,
He is served of his pay,
The good yeman lent it me,
As I came by the way.

This knyght than dwelled fayre at home,
 The soth for to say,
 Tyll he had got foure hondreth ponde,
 All redy for too paye.

He purveyed hym an hondred bowes,
 The strenges [were] welle dyght,
 An hondred shefe of arowes good,
 The hedes burnyshed full bryght,

And every arowe an elle longe,
 With pecocke well ydyght,
 Inocked all with whyte sylver,
 It was a semly syght.

He purveyed hym an hondreth men,
 Well harneysed in that stede,
 And hymselfe in that same sete,
 And clothed in whyte and rede.

He bare a launsgay in his honde,
 And a man ledde his male,
 And reden with a lyght songe,
 Unto Bernysdale.

As he went at a brydge ther was a wrastelyng,
 And there taryed was he,
 And there was all the best yemen,
 Of all the west countree.

A full fayre gamé there was upset,
 A whyte bull up ipyght;
 A grete courser with sadle and brydil,
 With golde burneyshed full bryght;

A payre of gloves, a rede golde rynge,
A pype of wyne, in good fay :
What man bereth him best, I wys,
The pryce shall bere away.

There was a yeman in that place,
And best worthy was he,
And for he was ferre and frend bestad,
Islayne he sholde have be.

The knyght had reuth of this yemàn,
In place where that he stode,
He said that yoman sholde have no harme,
For love of Robyn Hode.

The knyght presed into the place,
An hondred folowed hym 'fre,'
With bowes bent, and arowes sharpe,
For to shende that company.

They sholdred all, and made hym rome,
To wete what he wolde say,
He toke the yeman by the honde,
And gave hym all the playe ;

He gave hym fyve marke for his wyne,
There it laye on the molde,
And bad it sholde be sette a broche,
Drynke who so wolde.

Thus longe taryed this gentyll knyght,
Tyll that playe was done,
So longe abode Robyn fastynge,
Thre houres after the none.

THE THYRDE FYTTE.

LYTH and lysten, gentyll men,
 All that now be here,
 Of Lytell Johan, that was the knyghtes man,
 Good myrthe shall ye here.

It was upon a mery day,
 That yonge men wolde go shete,
 Lytell Johan fet his bowe anone,
 And sayd he wolde them mete.

Thre tymes Lytell Johan shot about,
 And alway cleft the wande,
 The proude sheryf of Notyngham
 By the markes gan stande.

The sheryf swore a full grete othe,
 By hym that dyed on a tree,
 This man is the best archere
 That yet sawe I me.

Say me now, wyght yonge man,
 What is now thy name?
 In what countre were thou born,
 And where is thy wonnyng wan?

“ In Holdernesse I was bore,
 I wys all of my dame,
 Men call me Reynolde Grenelefe,
 Whan I am at hame.”

"Say me, Reynaud Grenelefe,
Wolte thou dwell with me?
And every yere I wyll the gyve
Twenty marke to thy fee."

I have a mayster, sayd Lytell Johan,
A curteys knyght is he,
May ye gete leve of hym,
The better may it bee.

The sheryfe gate Lytell Johan
Twelve monethes of the knyght,
Therefore he gave him ryght anone
A good hors and a wyght.

Now is Lytel Johan the sheryffes man,
He gyve us well to spede,
But alway thought Lytell Johan
To quyte hym well his mede.

Now so god me helpe, sayd Lytel Johan,
And be my trewe lewte,
I shall be the worste servaunte to hym
That ever yet had he.

It befell upon a wednesday,
The sheryfe on hontynge was gone,
And Lytel Johan lay in his bed,
And was foryete at home.

Therefore he was fastynge
Tyl it was past the none.
Good syr stuard, I pray the,
Geve me to dyne, sayd Lytel Johan,

It is to long for Grenelefe,
 Fastynge so long to be ;
 Therfore I pray the, stuarde,
 My dyner gyve thou me.

Shalt thou never ete ne drynke, sayd the stuarde,
 Tyll my lord be come to towne.
 I make myn avowe to god, sayd Lytell Johan,
 I had lever to cracke thy crowne.

The butler was ful uncurteys,
 There he stode on flore,
 He sterte to the buttery,
 And shet fast the dore.

Lytell Johan gave the buteler such a rap,
 His backe yede nygh on two,
 Tho he lyved an hundreth wynter,
 The wors he sholde go.

He sporned the dore with his fote,
 It went up wel and fyne,
 And there he made a large lyveray
 Both of ale and wyne.

Syth ye wyl not dyne, sayd Lytel Johan,
 I shall gyve you to drynke,
 And though ye lyve an hondred wynter,
 On Lytell Johan ye shall thynk.

Lytell Johan ete, and Lytell [Johan] dronke,
 The whyle that he wolde.
 The sheryfe had in his kechyn a coke,
 A stoute man and a bolde.

I make myn avowe to god, sayd the coke,
Thou arte a shrewde hynde,
In an housholde to dwel,
For to ask thus to dyne.

And there he lent Lytel Johan,
Good strokes thre.
I make myn avowe, sayd Lytell Johan,
These strokes lyketh well me.

Thou arte a bolde man and an hardy,
And so thynketh me;
And or I passe fro this place,
Asayed better shalt thou be.

Lytell Johan drewe a good swerde,
The coke toke another in honde;
They thought nothyng for to fle,
But styfly for to stonde.

There they fought sore togyder,
Two myle way and more,
Myght neyther other harme done,
The mountenaunce of an houre.

I make myn avowe to god, sayd Lytell Johan,
And be my trewe lewtè,
Thou art one of the best swerdemen
That ever yet sawe I me.

Cowdest thou shote as well in a bowe,
To grene wood thou sholdest with me,
And two tymes in the yere thy clothynge
Ichaunged sholde be;

And every yere of Robyn Hode
 Twenty marke to thy fee.
 Put up thy swerde, sayd the coke,
 And felowes wyll we be.

Then he fette to Lytell Johan
 The numbles of a doo,
 Good brede and full good wyne,
 They ete and dranke therto.

And whan they had dronken well,
 Ther trouthes togyder they plyght,
 That they wolde be with Robyn
 That ylke same day at nyght.

The dyde them to the tresure-hous,
 As fast as they myght gone,
 The lockes that were of good stele
 They brake them everychone ;

They toke away the sylver vessell,
 And all that they myght get,
 Peces, masars, and spones,
 Wolde they non forgete ;

Also they toke the good pence,
 Thre hondred pounce and three ;
 And dyde them strait to Robyn Hode,
 Under the grene wode tre.

“ God the save, my dere maystèr,
 And Cryst the save and se.”
 And than sayd Robyn to Lytell Johan,
 Welcome myght thou be ;

And also be that fayre yemàn
Thou bryngest there with the.
What tydynges fro Notyngham?
Lytell Johan, tell thou me.

“ Well the greteth the proude sheryfe,
And sende the here by me
His coke and his sylver vessell,
And thre hondred pounce and thre.”

I make myn avow to god, sayd Robyn,
And to the trenytè,
It was never by his good wyll,
This good is come to me.

Lytell Johan hym there bethought,
On a shrewed wyle,
Fyve myle in the forest he ran,
Hym happed at his wyll ;

Than he met the proud sheryf,
Huntyng with hounde and horne,
Lytell Johan coud his curteysye,
And kneled hym beforne :

“ God the save, my dere maystèr,
And Cryst the save and see.”
Raynolde Grenelefe, sayd the sheryfe,
Where hast thou nowe be ?

“ I have be in this forest,
A fayre syght can I se,
It was one of the fayrest syghtes
That ever yet sawe I me ;

Yonder I se a ryght fayre hart,
His coloure is of grene,
Seven score of dere upon an herde
Be with hym all bedene;

His tynde are so sharp, maystèr,
Of sixty and well mo,
That I durst not shote for drede
Lest they wolde me sloo."

I make myn avowe to god, sayd the sheryf,
That syght wolde I fayn se.
"Buske you thyderwarde, my dere maystèr,
Anone, and wende with me."

The sheryfe rode, and Lytell Johan
Of fote he was full smarte,
And whan they came afore Robyn :
"Lo, here is the mayster harte!"

Styll stode the proude sheryf,
A sory man was he :
"Wo worthe the, Raynolde Grenelefe !
Thou hast now betrayed me."

I make myn avowe to god, sayd Lytell Johan,
Mayster, ye be to blame,
I was myserved of my dynere,
When I was with you at hame.

Soone he was to super sette,
And served with sylver whyte ;
And whan the sheryf se his vessell,
For sorowe he myght not ete.

Make good chere, sayd Robyn Hode,
Sheryfe, for charytè,
And for the love of Lytell Johan,
Thy lyfe is graunted to the.

When they had supped well,
The day was all agone,
Robyn commaunded Lytell Johan
To drawe of his hosen and his shone,

His kyrtell and his cote a pye,
That was furred well fyne,
And take him a grene mantell,
To lappe his body therin.

Robyn commaunded his wyght yong men,
Under the grene wood tre,
They shall lay in that same sorte;
That the sheryf myght them se.

All nyght laye that proud sheryf,
In his breche and in his sherte,
No wonder it was in grene wode,
Tho his sydes do smerte.

Make glad chere, sayd Robyn Hode,
Sheryfe, for charytè,
For this is our order I wys,
Under the grene wood tre.

This is harder order, sayd the sheryfe,
Than ony anker or frere;
For al the golde in mery Englonde
I wolde not longe dwell here.

All these twelve monethes, sayd Robyn,
Thou shalte dwell with me;
I shall the teche, proud sheryfe,
An outlawe for to be.

Or I here another nyght lye, sayd the sheryfe,
Robyn, nowe I praye the,
Smyte of my hede rather to-morne,
And I forgyve it the.

Lete me go, then sayd the sheryf,
For saynt Charytè,
And I wyll be thy best frende
That ever yet had the.

Thou shalte swere me an othe, sayd Robyn,
On my bryght bronde,
Thou shalt never awayte me scathe,
By water ne by londe;

And if thou fynde ony of my men,
By nyght or by day,
Upon thyne othe thou shalt swere,
To helpe them that thou may.

Now have the sheryf iswore his othe,
And home he began to gone,
He was as full of grene wode
As ever was hepe of stone.

THE FOURTH FYTTE.

THE sheryf dwelled in Notynghame,
He was fayne that he was gone,
And Robyn and his mery men
Went to wode anone.

Go we to dyner, sayd Lytell Johan.
Robyn Hode sayd, Nay;
For I drede our lady be wroth with me,
For she sent me not my pay.

Have no dout, mayster, sayd Lytell Johan,
Yet is not the sonne at rest,
For I dare saye, and saufly swere,
The knyght is trewe and trust.

Take thy bowe in thy hande, sayd Robyn,
Let Moch wende with the,
And so shall Wylliam Scathelock,
And no man abyde with me,

And walke up into the Sayles,
And to Watlynge-strete,
And wayte after 'some' unketh gest,
Up-chaunce ye may them mete.

Whether he be messengere,
Or a man that myrthes can,
Or yf he be a pore man,
Of my good he shall have some.

Forth then stert Lytel Johan,
Half in tray and tene,
And gyrde hym with a full good swerde,
Under a mantel of grene.

They went up to the Sayles,
These yemen all thre ;
They loked est, they loked west,
They myght no man se.

But as ' they ' loked in Bernysdale,
By the hye waye,
Than were they ware of two blacke monkes,
Eche on a good palferay.

Then bespake Lytell Johan,
To Much he gan say,
I dare lay my lyfe to wedde,
That these monkes have brought our pay.

Make glad chere, sayd Lytell Johan,
And frese our bowes of ewe,
And loke your hertes be seker and sad,
Your strynges trusty and trewe.

The monke hath fifty two men,
And seven somers full stronge,
There rydeth no bysshop in this londe
So ryally, I understand.

Brethern, sayd Lytell Johan,
Here are no more but we thre ;
But we brynge them to dyner,
Our mayster dare we not se.

D

Bende your bowes, sayd Lytell Johan,
Make all yon prese to stonde,
The formost monke, his lyfe and his deth
Is closed in my honde.

Abyde, chorle monke, sayd Lytell Johan,
No ferther that thou gone;
Yf thou doost, by dere worthy god,
Thy deth is in my honde.

And evyll thryfte on thy hede, sayd Lytell Johan,
Ryght under thy hattes bonde,
For thou hast made our mayster wroth,
He is fastynge so longe.

Who is your mayster? sayd the monke.
Lytell Johan sayd, Robyn Hode.
He is a stronge thefe, sayd the monke,
Of hym herd I never good.

Thou lvest, than sayd Lytell Johan,
And that shall rewe the;
He is a yeman of the forèst,
To dyne he hath bode the.

Much was redy with a bolte,
Redly and a none,
He set the monke to fore the brest,
To the grounde that he can gone.

Of fyfty two wyght yonge men,
There abode not one,
Saf a lytell page, and a grome
To lde the somers with Johan.

They brought the monke to the lodge dore,
Whether he were loth or lefe,
For to speke with Robyn Hode,
Maugre in theyr tethe.

Robyn dyde adowne his hode,
The monke whan that he se;
The monke was not so curteyse,
His hode then let he be.

He is a chorle, mayster, by dere worthy god,
Than sayd Lytell Johan.
Thereof no force, sayd Robyn,
For curteysy can he none.

How many men, sayd Robyn,
Had this monke, Johan?
"Fyfty and two whan that we met,
But many of them be gone."

Let blowe a horne, sayd Robin,
That felaushyp may us knowe;
Seven score of wyght yemen,
Came pryckyng on a rowe,

And everych of them a good mantell,
Of scarlet and of raye,
All they came to good Robyn,
To wyte what he wolde say.

They made the monke to wasshe and wype,
And syt at his denere,
Robyn Hode and Lytel Johan
They served 'him' bothe in fere.

Do gladly, monke, sayd Robyn.

Gramercy, syr, sayd he.

“Where is your abbay, whan ye are at home,
And who is your avowè?”

Saynt Mary abbay, sayd the monke,

Though I be symple here.

In what offyce? sayd Robyn.

“Syr, the hye selerer.”

Ye be the more welcome, sayd Robyn,

So ever mote I the.

Fyll of the best wyne, sayd Robyn,

This monke shall drynke to me.

But I have grete mervayle, sayd Robyn,

Of all this longe day,

I drede our lady be wroth with me,

She sent me not my pay.

Have no doute, mayster, sayd Lytell Johan,

Ye have no nede I saye,

This monke it hath brought, I dare well swere,

For he is of her abbay.

And she was a borowe, sayd Robyn,

Betwene a knyght and me,

Of a lytell money that I hym lent,

Under the grene wode tree;

And yf thou hast that sylver ibroughte,

I praye the let me se,

And I shall helpe the eftsones,

Yf thou have nede of me.

The monke swore a full grete othe,
With a sory chere,
Of the borowehode thou spekest to me,
Herde I never ere.

I make myn avowe to god, sayd Robyn,
Monke, thou arte to blame,
For god is holde a ryghtwys man,
And so is his dame.

Thou toldest with thyn owne tonge,
Thou may not say nay,
How thou arte her servaunt,
And servest her every day :

And thou art made her messengere,
My money for to pay,
Therefore I cun the more thanke,
Thou arte come at thy day.

What is in your cofers ? sayd Robyn,
Trewe than tell thou me.
Syr, he sayd, twenty marke,
Al so mote I the.

Yf there be no more, sayd Robyn,
I wyll not one peny ;
Yf thou hast myster of ony more,
Syr, more I shall lende to the ;

And yf I fynde more, sayd Robyn,
I wys thou shalte it forgone ;
For of thy spendynge sylver, monk,
Therof wyll I ryght none.

Go nowe forthe, Lytell Johan,
And the trouth tell thou me;
If there be no more but twenty marke,
No peny that I se.

Lytell Johan spred his mantell downe,
As he had done before,
And he tolde out of the monkes male,
Eyght hundreth pounce and more.

Lytell Johan let it lye full styll,
And went to his mayster in hast;
Syr, he sayd, the monke is trewe ynowe,
Our lady hath doubled your cost.

I make myn avowe to god, sayd Robyn,
Monke, what tolde I the?
Our lady is the trewest woman,
That ever yet founde I me.

By dere worthy god, sayd Robyn,
To seche all Englonde thorowe,
Yet founde I never to my pay
A moche better borowe.

Fyll of the best wyne, do hym drynke, sayd Robyn;
And grete well thy lady hende,
And yf she have nede of Robyn Hode,
A frende she shall hym fynde;

And yf she nedeth ony more sylver,
Come thou agayne to me,
And, by this token she hath me sent,
She shall have such thre.

The monke was going to London ward,
 There to holde grete mote,
 The knyght that rode so hye on hors,
 To brynge hym under fote.

Whether be ye away? sayd Robyn.
 "Syr, to maners in this londe,
 Too reken with our reves,
 That have done moch wronge."

"Come now forth, Lytell Johan,
 And harken to my tale,
 A better yeman I knowe none,
 To seke a monkes male."

How moch is in yonder other 'cofer?' sayd Robyn,
 The soth must we see.
 By our lady, than sayd the monke,
 That were no curteysye

To bydde a man to dyner,
 And syth hym bete and bynde.
 It is our olde maner, sayd Robyn,
 To leve but lytell behynde.

The monke toke the hors with spore,
 No lenger wolde he abyde.
 Aske to drynke, than sayd Robyn,
 Or that ye forther ryde.

Nay, for god, than sayd the monke,
 Me reweth I cam so nere,
 For better chepe I myght have dyned,
 In Blythe or in Dankestere.

Grete well your abbot, sayd Robyn,
And your pryour, I you pray,
And byd hym sende me such a monke,
To dyner every day.

Now lete we that monke be styll,
And speke we of that knyght,
Yet he came to holde his day
Whyle that it was lyght.

He dyde him streyt to Bernysdale,
Under the grene wode tre,
And he founde there Robyn Hode,
And all his mery meynè.

The knyght lyght downe of his good palfray,
Robyn whan he gan see,
So curteysly he dyde adoune his hode,
And set hym on his knee.

“God the save, good Robyn Hode,
And al this company.”
“Welcome be thou, gentyll knyght,
And ryght welcome to me.”

Than bespake hym Robyn Hode,
To that knyght so fre,
What nede dryveth the to grene wode?
I pray the, syr knyght, tell me.

And welcome be thou, gentyl knyght,
Why hast thou be so longe?
“For the abbot and the hye justyce
Wolde have had my londe.”

Hast thou thy londe agayne? sayd Robyn
 Treuth than tell thou me.
 Ye, for god, sayd the knyght,
 And that thanke I god and the.

But take not a grefe, I have be so longe ;
 I came by a wrastelynge,
 And there I dyd holpe a pore yemàn,
 With wronge was put behynde.

Nay, for god, sayd Robyn,
 Syr knyght, that thanke I the ;
 What man that helpeth a good yemàn,
 His frende than wyll I be.

Have here foure hondred pounde, than sayd the
 The whiche ye lent to me ; [knyght,
 And here is also twenty marke
 For your curteysy.

Nay, for god, than sayd Robyn,
 Thou broke it well for ay,
 For our lady, by her selerer,
 Hath sent to me my pay ;

And yf I toke it twyse,
 A shame it were to me :
 But trewely, gentyll knyght,
 Welcom arte thou to me.

Whan Robyn had tolde his tale,
 He leugh and had good chere.
 By my trouthe, then sayd the knyght,
 Your money is redy here.

Broke it well, sayd Robyn,
Thou gentyll knyght so fre;
And welcome be thou, gentill knyght,
Under my trystell tree.

But what shall these bowes do? sayd Robyn,
And these arowes ifedered fre?
By god, than sayd the knyght,
A pore present to the.

“Come now forth, Lytell Johan,
And go to my treasure,
And brynge me there foure hondred pounce,
The monke over-tolde it to me.

Have here foure hondred pounce,
Thou gentyll knyght and trewe,
And bye hors and harnes good,
And gylte thy spores all newe :

And yf thou fayle ony spendynge,
Com to Robyn Hode,
And by my trouthe thou shalt none fayle
The whyles I have any good.

And broke well thy four hundred pound,
Whiche I lent to the,
And make thy selfe no more so bare,
By the counsell of me.”

Thus than holpe hym good Robyn,
The knyght all of his care.
God, that sytteth in heven hye,
Graunte us well to fare.

THE FYFTH FYTTE.

Now hath the knyght his leve itake,
And wente hym on his way ;
Robyn Hode and his mery men
Dwelled styll full many a day.

Lyth and lysten, gentil men,
And herken what I shall say,
How the proud sheryfe of Notyngham
Dyde crye a full fayre play ;

That all the best archers of the north
Sholde come upon a day,
And ‘ he ’ that shoteth ‘ alder ’ best
The game shall bere away.

“ He that shoteth ‘ alder ’ best
Furthest fayre and lowe,
At a payre of fynly buttes,
Under the grene wode shawe,

A ryght good arowe he shall have,
The shaft of sylver whyte,
The heade and the feders of ryche rede golde,
In Englonde is none lyke.”

This then herde good Robyn,
Under his trystell tre :
“ Make you redy, ye wyght yonge men,
That shotynge wyll I se.

Buske you, my mery yonge men,
Ye shall go with me;
And I wyll wete the shryves fayth,
Trewe and yf he be."

Whan they had theyr bowes ibent,
Theyr takles fedred fre,
Seven score of wyght yonge men
Stode by Robyns kne.

Whan they cam to Notyngnam,
The buttes were fayre and longe,
Many was the bold archere
That shoted with bowes stronge.

"There shall but syx shote with me,
The other shal kepe my hede,
And stande with good bowes bent
That I be not desceyved."

The fourth outlawe his bowe gan bende,
And that was Robyn Hode,
And that behelde the proude sheryfe,
All by the but he stode.

Thryes Robyn shot about,
And alway he slist the wand,
And so dyde good Gylberte,
With the whyte hande.

LyteU Johan and good Scatheloke
Were archers good and fre;
LyteU Much and good Reynolde,
The worste wolde they not be.

Whan they had shot aboute,
These archours fayre and good,
Evermore was the best,
Forsoth, Robyn Hode.

Hym was delyvered the goode aròw,
For best worthy was he ;
He toke the yeft so curteysly,
To grene wode wolde he.

They cryed out on Robyn Hode,
And great hornes gan they blowe.
Wo worth the, treason ! sayd Robyn,
Full evyl thou art to knowe.

And wo be thou, thou proud sheryf,
Thus gladdyng thy gest,
Other wyse thou behote me
In yonder wylde forest ;

But had I the in grene wode,
Under my trystell tre,
Thou sholdest leve me a better wedde
Than thy trewe lewte.

Full many a bowe there was bent,
And arowes let they glyde,
Many a kyrtell there was rent,
And hurt many a syde.

The outlawes shot was so stronge,
That no man myght them dryve,
And the proud sheryfes men
They fled away full blyve.

Robyn sawe the busschement to-broke,
In grene wode he wolde have be,
Many an arowe there was shot
Amonge that company.

Lytell Johan was hurte full sore,
With an arowe in his kne,
That he myght neyther go nor ryde ;
It was full grete pytè.

Mayster, then sayd Lytell Johan,
If ever thou lovest me,
And for that ylke lordes love,
That dyed upon a tre,

And for the medes of my servyce,
That I have served the,
Lete never the proude sheryf
Alyve now fynde me ;

But take out thy browne swerde,
And smyte all of my hede,
And gyve me woundes dede and wyde,
No lyfe on me be lefte.

I wolde not that, sayd Robyn,
Johan, that thou were slawe,
For all the golde in mery Englund,
Though it lay now on a rawe.

God forbede, sayd lytell Much,
That dyed on a tre,
That thou sholdest, Lytell Johan,
Parte our company.

Up he toke him on his backe,
And bare hym well a myle,
Many a tyme he layd hym downe,
And shot another whyle.

Then was there a fayre castell,
A lytell within the wode,
Double-dyched it was about,
And walled, by the rode ;

And there dwelled that gentyll knyght,
Syr Rychard at the Lee,
That Robyn had lent his good,
Under the grene wode tree.

In he toke good Robyn,
And all his company :
“ Welcome be thou, Robyn Hode,
Welcome arte thou [to] me ;

And moche [I] thanke the of thy comfort,
And of thy curteysye,
And of thy grete kyndenesse,
Under the grene wode tre ;

I love no man in all this worlde
So moch as I do the ;
For all the proud sheryf of Notyngham,
Ryght here shalt thou be.

Shyt the gates, and drawe the bridge,
And let no man com in ;
And arme you well, and make you redy,
And to the walle ye wyne.

For one thyng, Robyn, I the behote,
I swere by saynt Quyntyn,
These twelve dayes thou wonest with me,
To suppe, ete, and dyne."

Bordes were layed, and clothes spred,
Reddely and anone;
Robyn Hode and his mery men
To mete gan they gone.

THE SYXTE FYTTE.

LYTHE and lysten, gentylmen,
And herken unto your songe;
How the proude sheryfe of Notyngham,
And men of armes stronge,

Full faste came to the hye sheryfe,
The countre up to rout,
And they beset the knyghts castèll,
The walles all about.

The proude sheryf loude gan crye,
And sayd, Thou traytour knyght,
Thou kepeste here the kynges enemye,
Agayne the lawes and ryght.

"Syr, I wyll avowe that I have done,
The dedes that here be dyght,
Upon all the londes that I have,
As I am a trewe knyght.

Wende forthe, syrs, on your waye,
And doth no more to me,
Tyll ye wytte our kynges wyll
What he woll say to the."

The sheref thus had his answere,
With out ony leasyng,
Forthe he yode to London toun,
All for to tel our kyng.

There he tolde him of that knyght,
And eke of Robyn Hode,
And also of the bolde archeres,
That noble were and good.

"He wolde avowe that he had done,
To mayntayne the outlawes stronge,
He wolde be lorde, and set you at nought,
In all the north londe."

I woll be at Notyngham, sayd the kyng,
Within this fourtynight,
And take I wyll Robyn Hode,
And so I wyll that knyght.

Go home, thou prouid sheryf,
And do as I bydde the,
And ordayne good archeres inowe,
Of all the wyde countree.

The sheryf had his leve itake,
And went hym on his way;
And Robyn Hode to grene wode [went]
Upon a certayn day;

E

And Lytell Johan was hole of the arowe,
That shote was in his kne,
And dyde hym strayte to Robyn Hode,
Under the grene wode tre.

Robyn Hode walked in the foreste,
Under the leves grene,
The proud sheryfe of Notyngham,
Therefore he had grete tene.

The sheryf there fayled of Robyn Hode,
He myght not have his pray,
Then he awayted that gentyll knyght,
Bothe by nyght and by daye.

Ever he awayted that gentyll knyght,
Syr Rychard at the Lee;
As he went on haukyng by the ryver syde,
And let his haukes flee,

Toke he there his gentyll knyght,
With men of armes stronge,
And lad hym home to Notyngham warde,
Ibonde both fote and honde.

The sheryf swore a full grete othe,
By hym that dyed on a tre,
He had lever than an hondrede ponde,
That Robyn Hode had he.

Then the lady, the knyghtes wyfe,
A fayre lady and fre,
She set her on a gode palfray,
To grene wode anon rode she.

When she came to the forèst,
Under the grene wode tre,
Founde she there Robyn Hode,
And all his fayre meynè.

“God the save, good Robyn Hode,
And all thy company;
For our dere ladyes love,
A bone graunte thou me.

Let thou never my wedded lorde
Shamfully slayne to be;
He is fast ibounde to Notyngham warde,
For the love of the.”

Anone then sayd good Robyn,
To that lady fre,
What man hath your lorde itake?
The proude shirife, than sayd she.

[The proude sheryfe hath hym itake]
Forsoth as I the say;
He is not yet thre myles,
Passed on ‘his’ waye.

Up then sterte good Robyn,
As a man that had be wode:
“Buske you, my mery younge men,
For hym that dyed on a rode;

And he that this sorowe forsaketh,
By hym that dyed on a tre,
And by him that al thinges maketh,
No lenger shall dwell with me.”

Sone there were good bowes ibent,
Mo than seven score,
Hedge ne dyche spared they none,
That was them before.

I make myn avowe to god, sayd Robyn,
The knyght wolde I fayn se,
And yf I may hym take,
Iquyt than shall he bee.

And whan they came to Notyngham,
They walked in the strete,
And with the proud sheryf, I wys,
Sone gan they mete.

Abyde, thou proud sheryf, he sayd,
Abyde and speake with me,
Of some tydynges of our kynge,
I wolde fayne here of the.

This seven yere, by dere worthy god,
Ne yede I so fast on fote,
I make myn avowe to god, thou proud sheryfe,
'It' is not for thy good.

Robyn bent a good bowe,
An arrowe he drewe at his wyll,
He hyt so the proud sheryf,
Upon the grounde he lay full styl;

And or he myght up aryse,
On his fete to stonde,
He smote of the sheryves hede,
With his bryght bronde.

“ Lye thou there, thou proud sheryf,
 Evyll mote thou thryve;
 There myght no man to the trust,
 The whyles thou were alyve.”

His men drewe out theyr bryght swerdes,
 That were so sharpe and kene,
 And layde on the sheryves men,
 And dryved them downe bydene.

Robyn stert to that knyght,
 And cut a two his bonde,
 And toke hym in his hand a bowe,
 And bade hym by hym stonde.

“ Leve thy hors the behynde,
 And lerne for to renne;
 Thou shalt with me to grene wode,
 Through myre, mosse and fenne;

Thou shalt with me to grene wode,
 Without ony leasyng,
 Tyll that I have gete us grace,
 Of Edwarde our comly kyng.”

THE SEVENTH FYTTE.

THE kyng came to Notynghame,
 With knyghtes in grete araye,
 For to take that gentyll knyght,
 And Robyn Hode, yf he may.

He asked men of that countrè,
After Robyn Hode,
And after that gentyll knyght,
That was so bolde and stout.

Whan they had tolde hym the case,
Our kynge understonde ther tale,
And seased in his honde
The knyghtes londes all,

All the passe of Lancasshyre,
He went both ferre and nere,
Tyll he came to Plomton parke,
He fayld many of his dere.

There our kynge was wont to se
Herdes many one,
He coud unneth fynde one dere,
That bare ony good horne.

The kynge was wonder wroth withall,
And swore by the trynytè,
“ I wolde I had Robyn Hode,
With eyen I myght hym se ;

And he that wolde smyte of the knyghtes hede,
And brynge it to me,
He shall have the knyghtes londes,
Syr Rycharde at the Le ;

I gyve it hym with my charter,
And sele it with my honde,
To have and holde for ever-more,
In all mery Englonde.”

Than bespake a fayre olde knyght,
 That was treue in his fay,
 A, my lege lorde the kynge,
 One worde I shall you say ;

There is no man in this countre
 May have the knyghtes londes,
 While Robyn Hode may ryde or gone,
 And bere a bowe in his hondes ;

That he ne shall lese his hede,
 That is the best ball in his hode :
 Give it no man, my lorde the kynge,
 That ye wyll any good.

Half a yere dwelled our comly kynge,
 In Notyngham, and well more,
 Coude he not here of Robyn Hode,
 In what countre that he were ;

But alway went good Robyn
 By halke and eke by hyll,
 And alway slewe the kynges dere,
 And welt them at his wyll.

Than bespake a proude fostere,
 That stode by our kynges kne,
 If ye wyll se good Robyn,
 Ye must do after me.

Take fyve of the best knyghtes
 That be in your lede,
 And walke downe by ' yon ' abbay,
 And gete you monkes wede.

And I wyll be your ledes man,
And lede you the way,
And or ye come to Notyngham,
Myn hede then dare I lay,

That ye shall mete with good Robyn,
On lyve yf that he be,
Or ye come to Notyngham,
With eyen ye shall hym se.

Full hastly our kynge was dyght,
So were his knyghtes fyve,
Everych of them in monkes wede,
And hasted them thyder blyth.

Our kynge was grete above his cole,
A brode hat on his crowne,
Ryght as he were abbot-lyke,
They rode up in-to the towne.

Styf botes our kynge had on,
Forsoth as I you say,
He rode syngynge to grene wode,
The covent was clothed in graye,

His male hors, and his grete somers,
Folowed our kynge behynde,
Tyll they came to grene wode,
A myle under the lynde,

There they met with good Robyn,
Stondynge on the waye,
And so dyde many a bolde archere,
For soth as I you say.

Robyn toke the kynges hors,
Hastely in that stede,
And sayd, Syr abbot, by your leve,
A whyle ye must abyde ;

We be yemen of this foreste,
Under the grene wode tre,
We lyve by our kynges dere,
Other shyft have not we ;

And ye have chyrches and rentes both,
And gold full grete plentè ;
Gyve us some of your spendynge,
For saynt Charytè.

Than bespake our cumly kyng,
Anone than sayd he,
I brought no more to grene wode,
But forty ponde with me.

I have layne at Notyngham,
This fourtynyght with our kyng,
And spent I have full moche good,
On many a grete lordynge ;

And I have but forty ponde,
No more than have I me,
But yf I had an hondred ponde,
I would geve it to the.

Robyn toke the forty ponde,
And departed it in two partye,
Halfendell he gave his mery men,
And bad them mery to be.

Full curteysly Robyn gan say,
Syr, have this for your spendyng,
We shall mete a nother day.
Gramercy, than sayd our kynge ;

But well the greteth Edwarde our kynge,
And sent to the his seale,
And byddeth the com to Notyngham,
Both to mete and mele.

He toke out the brode tarpe,
And sone he lete hym se ;
Robyn coud his courteysy,
And set hym on his kne :

“ I love no man in all the worlde
So well as I do my kynge,
Welcome is my lordes seale ;
And, monke, for thy tydynges,

Syr abbot, for thy tydynges,
To day thou shalt dyne with me
For the love of my kynge
Under my trystell tre.”

Forth he lad our comly kynge,
Full fayre by the honde,
Many a dere there was slayne,
And full fast dyghtande.

Robyn toke a full grete horne,
And loude he gan blowe,
Seven score of wyght yonge men,
Came redy on a rowe,

All they kneeled on theyr kne,
Full fayre before Robyn.
The kynge sayd hymselfe untyll,
And swore by saynt Austyn,

Here is a wonder semely syght,
Me thynketh, by goddes pyne;
His men are more at his byddyng,
Then my men be at myn.

Full hastly was theyr dyner idyght,
And therto gan they gone,
They served our kynge with al theyr myght,
Both Robyn and Lytell Johan.

Anone before our kynge was set
The fatte venyson,
The good whyte brede, the good red wyne,
And therto the fyne ale browne.

Make good chere, sayd Robyn,
Abbot, for charytè;
And for this ylke tydyng,
Blyssed mote thou be.

Now shalte thou se what lyfe we lede,
Or thou hens wende,
Than thou may enfourme our kynge,
Whan ye togyder lende.

Up they sterte all in hast,
Theyr bowes were smartly bent,
Our kynge was never so sore agast,
He wende to have be shente.

Two yerdes there were up set,
There to gan they gange ;
By fifty pase, our kyng sayd,
The merkes were to longe.

On every syde a rose garlonde,
They shot under the lyne.
Who so fayleth of the rose garlonde, sayd Robyn,
His takyll he shall tyne,

And yelde it to his mayster,
Be it never so fyne,
For no man wyll I spare,
So drynke I ale or wyne.

And bere a buffet on his hede,
I wys ryght all bare.
And all that fell in Robyns lote,
He smote them wonder sare.

Twyse Robyn shot aboute,
And ever he cleved the wande,
And so dyde good Gylberte,
With the whyte hand ;

Lytell Johan and good Scathelocke,
For nothyng wolde they spare,
When they fayled of the garlonde,
Robyn smote them full sare.

At the last shot that Robyn shot,
For all his frendes fare,
Yet he fayled of the garlonde,
Thre fyngers and mare.

Than bespake good Gylberte,
 And thus he gan say,
 Mayster, he sayd, your takyll is lost,
 Stand forth and take your pay.

If it be so, sayd Robyn,
 That may no better be;
 Syr abbot, I delyver the myn arowe,
 I pray the, syr, serve thou me.

It falleth not for myn order, sayd our kyng,
 Robyn, by thy leve,
 For to smyte no good yemàn,
 For doute I sholde hym greve.

Smyte on boldely, sayd Robyn,
 I give the large leve.
 Anone our kyng, with that worde,
 He folde up his sleve,

And sych a buffet he gave Robyn,
 To grounde he yede full nere.
 I make myn avowe to god, sayd Robyn,
 Thou arte a stalworthe frere;

There is pith in thyn arme, sayd Robyn,
 I trowe thou canst well shote.
 Thus our kyng and Robyn Hode
 Togeder than they met.

Robyn behelde our comly kyng
 Wystly in the face,
 So dyde syr Richarde at the Le,
 And kneled downe in that place;

And so hyde all the wylde outlawes,
Whan they se them knele.

“ My lorde the kyng of Englonde,
Now I knowe you well.”

Mercy, then Robyn sayd to our kyng,
Under your trystyll tre,
Of thy goodnesse and thy grace,
For my men and me !

Yes, for god, sayd Robyn,
And also god me save ;
I aske mercy, my lorde the kyng,
And for my men I crave.

Yes, for god, than sayd our kyng
Thy petition I graunt the,
With that thou leve the grene wode,
And all thy company ;

And come home, syr, to my courte,
And there dwell with me.
I make myn avowe to god, sayd Robyn,
And ryght so shall it be ;

I wyll come to your courte,
Your servyse for to se,
And brynge with me of my men
Seven score and thre.

But me lyke well your servyse,
I come agayne full soone,
And shote at the donne dere,
As I am wonte to done.

THE EIGHTH FYTTE.

HASTE thou ony grene cloth ? sayd our kynge,
That thou wylte sell nowe to me.
Ye, for god, sayd Robyn,
Thyrty yerdés, and thre.

Robyn, sayd our kynge,
Now pray I the,
To sell me some of that cloth,
To me and my meynè.

Yes, for god, then sayd Robyn,
Or elles I were a fole ;
A nother day ye wyll me clothe,
I trowe, ayenst the Yole.

The kynge kest of his cote then,
A grene garment he dyde on,
And every knyght had so, I wys,
They clothed them full soone.

Whan they were clothed in Lyncolne grene,
They kest away theyr graye.
Now we shall to Notyngham,
All thus our kynge gan say.

Theyr bowes bente and forth they went,
Shotynge all in-fere,
Towarde the towne of Notyngham,
Outlawes as they were.

Our kynge and Robyn rode togyder,
For soth as I you say,
And they shote plucke-buffet,
As they went by the way ;

And many a buffet our kynge wan,
Of Robyn Hode that day :
And nothyng spared good Robyn
Our kynge in his pay.

So god me helpe, sayd our kynge,
Thy game is nought to lere,
I sholde not get a shote of the,
Though I shote all this yere.

All the people of Notyngham
They stode and behelde,
They sawe nothyng but mantels of grene
They covered all the felde ;

Than every man to other gan say,
I drede our kynge be slone ;
Come Robyn Hode to the towne, I wys,
On lyve he leveth not one.

Full hastily they began to fle,
Both yemen and knaves,
And olde wyves that myght evyll goo,
They hypped on theyr staves.

The kynge loughe full fast,
And commanded theym agayne ;
When they se our comly kynge,
I wys they were full fayne.

They ete and dranke, and made them glad,
 And sange with notes hye.
 Than bespake our comly kynge
 To syr Rycharde at the Lee :

He gave hym there his londe agayne,
 A good man he bad hym be.
 Robyn thanked our comly kynge,
 And set hym on his kne.

Had Robyn dwelled in the kynges courte
 But twelve monethes and thre,
 That he had spent an hondred pounde,
 And all his mennes fe.

In every place where Robyn came,
 Ever more he layde downe,
 Both for knyghtes and for squyres,
 To gete hym grete renowne.

By than the yere was all agone,
 He had no man but twayne
 Lytell Johan and good Scathelocke,
 Wyth hym all for to gone.

Robyn sawe yonge men shote,
 Full fayre upon a day,
 Alas ! than sayd good Robyn,
 My welthe is went away.

Somtyme I was an archere good,
 A styffe and eke a stronge,
 I was commytted the best archere,
 That was in mery Englonde.

Alas ! then sayd good Robyn,
Alas and well a woo !
Yf I dwele lenger with the kynge,
Sorowe wyll me sloo.

Forth than went Robyn Hode,
Tyll he came to our kynge :
“ My lorde the kynge of Englonde,
Graunte me myn askynge.

I made a chapell in Bernysdale,
That semely is to se,
It is of Mary Magdalene,
And thereto wolde I be ;

I myght never in this seven nyght,
No tyme to slepe ne wynke,
Nother all these seven dayes,
Nother ete ne drynke.

Me longeth sore to Bernysdale,
I may not be therfro,
Barefote and wolwarde I have hyght
Thyder for to go.”

Yf it be so, than sayd our kynge,
It may no better be ;
Seven nyght I gyve the leve,
No lengre, to dwell fro me.

Gramercy, lorde, then sayd Robyn,
And set hym on his kne ;
He toke his leve full courteysly,
To grene wode then went he.

Whan he came to grene wode,
In a mery mornynge,
There he herde the notes small
Of byrdes mery syngynge.

It is ferre gone, sayd Robyn,
That I was last here,
Me lyste a lytell for to shote
At the donne dere.

Robyn slewe a full grete harte,
His horne than gan he blow,
That all the outlawes of that forèst,
That horne coud they knowe,

And gadred them togyder,
In a lytell throwe,
Seven score of wight yonge men,
Came redy on a rowe;

And fayre dyde of theyr hodes,
And set them on theyr kne:
Welcome, they sayd, our maystèr,
Under this grene wode tre.

Robyn dwelled in grene wode,
Twenty yere and two,
For all drede of Edwarde our kynge,
Agayne wolde he not goo.

Yet he was begyled, I wys,
Through a wycked womàn,
The pryoresse of Kyrkesly,
That nye was of his kynne,

For the love of a knyght,
Syr Roger of Donkestèr,
That was her owne speciall,
Full evyll mote they ' fare.'

They toke togyder theyr counsell
Robyn Hode for to sle,
And how they myght best do that dede,
His banis for to be.

Than bespake good Robyn,
In place where as he stode,
To morow I muste to Kyrkesley,
Craftely to be leten blode.

Syr Roger of Donkestere,
By the pryoresse he lay,
And there they betrayed good Robyn Hode,
Through theyr false playe.

Cryst have mercy on his soule,
That dyed on the rode !
For he was a good outlawe,
And dyde pore men moch god.





II.

ROBYN HODE AND THE POTTER.

THIS curious, and hitherto unpublished, and even unheard of old piece is given from a manuscript, among bishop More's collections, in the public library of the university of Cambridge (Ee. 4. 35). The writing, which is evidently that of a vulgar and illiterate person, appears to be of the age of Henry the seventh, that is about the year 1500; but the composition (which he has irremediably corrupted) is probably of an earlier period, and much older, no doubt, than "The play of Robyn Hode," which seems allusive to the same story. At the end of the original is "Expleycyt Robyn Hode."



U N schomer, when the leves spryng,
The bloschems on every bowe,
So merey doyt the berdys syng,
Yn wodys merey now,

Herkens, god yemen,
Comley, cortessey, and god,
On of the best that yever bar bou,
Hes name was Roben Hode.

Roben Hood was the yemans name,
That was boyt corteys and fre;
For the loffe of owr lady,
All wemen werschep 'he.'

Bot as the god yeman stod on a day,
Among hes mery maney,
He was war of a prowde potter,
Cam dryfyng owyr the 'ley.'

Yonder comet a prod potter, seyde Roben,
That long hayt hantyd this wey,
He was never so corteys a man
On peney of pawage to pay.

Y met hem bot at Wentbreg, seyde Lytyll John,
And therfor yeffell mot he the,
Seche thre strokes he me gafe,
Yet they cleffe by my seydys.

Y ley forty shillings, seyde Lytyll John,
To pay het thes same day,
Ther ys nat a man among hus all
A wed schall make hem ley.

Her ys forty shillings, seyde Roben,
Mor, and thow dar say,
That y schall make that prowde pottèr,
A wed to me schall he ley.

Ther thes money they leyde,
They toke het a yeman to kepe ;
Roben befor the potter he breyde,
' And up to hem can lepe.'

Handys apon hes horse he leyde,
And bad ' hem ' stonde foll stell.
The potter schorteley to hem seyde,
Felow, what ys they well ?

All thes thre yer, and mor, potter, he seyde,
Thow hast hantyd thes wey,
Yet wer tow never so cortys a man .
One peney of pauage to pay.

What ys they name, seyde the potter,
For pauage thow aske of me ?
“ Roben Hod ys mey name,
A wed schall thow leffe me.”

Wed well y non leffe, seyde the potter,
Nor pavag well y non pay ;
Awey they honde fro mey horse,
Y well the tene eyls, be mey fay.

The potter to hes cart he went,
He was not to seke,
A god to-hande staffe therowt he hent,
Befor Roben he ‘ lepe.’

Roben howt with a swerd bent,
A bokeler en hes honde [therto] ;
The potter to Roben he went,
And seyde, Fellow, let mey horse go.

Togeder then went thes two yemen,
Het was a god seyt to se ;
Therof low Robyn hes men,
Ther they stod onder a tre.

Leytell John to hes felowhes seyde,
Yend potter welle steffeley stonde.
The potter, with a caward stroke,
Smot the bokeler owt of hes honde ;

And ar Roben meyt get hen agen,
Hes bokeler at hes fette,
The potter yn the neke hem toke,
To the gronde sone he yede.

That saw Roben hes men,
As thay stode ender a bow :
Let us helpe owr master, seyde Lytell John,
Yonder potter els well hem sclo.

Thes yemen went with a breyde,
To ' ther' master they cam.
Leytell John to hes master seyde,
Ho haet the wager won ?

Schall y haff yowr forty shillings, seyde Lytel John,
Or ye, master, schall haffe myne ?
Yeff they wer a hundred, seyde Roben,
Y feythe, they ben all theyne.

Het ys fol leytell cortesey, seyde the potter,
As y haffe harde weyse men saye,
Yeff a poor yeman com drywyng ower the wey,
To let hem of hes gorney.

Be mey trowet, thow says soyt, seyde Roben,
Thow seys god yemenrey ;
And thow dreyffe forthe yevery day,
Thow schalt never be let for me.

Y well prey the, god potter,
A felischepe well thow haffe ?
Geffe me they clothyng, and thow schalt haffe myne ;
Y well go to Notynggam.

Y grant therto, seyde the potter,
Thow schalt feynde me a felow gode ;
Bot thow can sell mey pottes well,
Com ayen as thow yode.

Nay, be mey trowt, seyde Roben,
And then y bescro mey hede,
Yeffe y bryng eney pottes ayen,
And eney weyffe well hem chepe.

Than spake Leytell John,
And all hes felowhes heynd,
Master, be well war of the screffe of Notynggam,
For he ys leytell howr frende.

Thorow the helpe of howr ladey,
Felowhes, let me alone ;
Heyt war howte, seyde Roben,
To Notynggam well y gon.

Robyn went to Notynggam,
Thes pottes for to sell ;
The potter abode with Robens men,
Ther he fered not eylle.

Tho Roben droffe on hes wey,
So merey ower the londe.
Heres mor and affter ys to saye,
The best ys beheynde.

THE SECOND FIT.

WHEN Roben cam to Notynggam,
The soyt yef y scholde saye,
He set op hes horse anon,
And gaffe hem hotys and haye.

Yn the medys of the towne,
Ther he schowed hes war,
Pottys ! pottys ! he gan crey foll sone,
Haffe hansell for the mar.

Foll effen agenest the screffeys gate,
Schowed he hes chaffar ;
Weyffes and wedowes abowt hem drow,
And chepyd fast of hes war.

Yet, Pottys, gret chepe ! creyed Robyn,
Y loffe yeffell thes to stonde.
And all that saw hem sell,
Seyde he had be no potter long.

The pottys that wer werthe pens feyffe,
He solde tham for pens thre :
Preveley seyde man and weyffe,
Ywnder potter schall never the.

Thos Roben solde foll fast,
Tell he had pottys bot feyffe ;
Op he hem toke of his car,
And sende hem to the screffeys weyffe.

Therof sche was foll fayne,
Gereamarsey, sir, than seyde sche,
When ye com to thes contre ayen,
Y schall bey of 'they' pottys, so mot y the.

Ye schall haffe of the best, seyde Roben,
And swar be the treneytè.
Foll corteysley 'she' gan hem call,
Com deyne with the screffe and me.

Godamarsey, seyde Roben,
Yowr bedyng schall be doyn.
A mayden yn the pottys gan ber,
Robyn and the screffe weyffe folowed anon.

Whan Roben ynto the hall cam,
The screffe sone he met,
The potter cowed of corteysley,
And sone the screffe he gret.

"Loketh what thes potter hayt geffe yow and me,
Feyffe pottys smalle and grete!"
He ys fol wellcom, seyde the screffe,
Let os was, and 'go' to mete.

As they sat at her methe,
With a nobell cher,
Two of the screffes men gan speke
Off a gret wager,

Was made the thother daye,
Off a schotyng was god and feyne,
Off forty shillings, the soyt to saye,
Who scholde thes wager wen.

Styll than sat thes prowde potter,
Thos than thowt he,
As y am a trow Cerstyn man,
Thes schotyng well y se.

Whan they had fared of the best,
With bred and ale and weyne,
To the 'bottys they' made them prest,
With bowes and boltys foll feyne.

The screffes men schot foll fast,
As archares that weren godde,
Ther cam non ner ney the marke
Bey halfe a god archares bowe.

Stell then stod the prowde potter,
Thos than seyde he,
And y had a bow, be the rode,
On schot scholde yow se.

Thow schall haffe a bow, seyde the screffe,
The best that thow well cheys of thre ;
Thow semyst a stalward and a stronge,
Asay schall thow be.

The screffe comandyd a yeman that stod hem bey
Aftter bowhes to wende ;
The best bow that the yeman browthe
Roben set on a stryng.

" Now schall y wet and thow be god,
And polle het op to they ner."
So god me helpe, seyde the prowde pottèr,
Thys ys bot rygzt weke ger.

To a quequer Roben went,
A god bolt owthe he toke,
So ney on to the marke he went,
He fayled not a fothe.

All they schot abowthe agen,
The screffes men and he,
Off the marke he welde not fayle,
He cleffed the preke on thre.

The screffes men thowt gret schame,
The potter the mastry wan;
The screffe lowe and made god game,
And seyde, Potter, thow art a man;
Thow art worthey to ber a bowe,
Yn what plas that thow 'gang.'

Yn mey cart y haffe a bowe,
Forsoyt, he seyde, and that a godde;
Yn mey cart ys the bow
That 'I had of Robyn Hode.'

Knowest thow Robyn Hode? seyde the screffe,
Potter, y prey the tell thou me.
"A hundred torne y haffe schot with hem,
Under hes tortyll tre."

Y had lever nar a hundred ponde, seyde the screffe,
And swar be the trenitè,
[Y had lever nar a hundred ponde, he seyde,]
That the fals owtelawe stod be me.

And ye well do afftyr mey red, seyde the potter,
And boldeley go with me,
And to morow, or we het bred,
Roben Hode wel we se.

Y well queyt the, kod the screffe,
And swer be god of meythe.
Schetyng thay left, and hom they went,
Her scoper was redey deythe.

Upon the morow, when het was day,
He boskyd hem forthe to reyde;
The potter hes carte forthe gan ray,
And wolde not [be] leffe beheynde.

He toke leffe of the screffys wyffe,
And thankyd her of all thyng;
“ Dam, for mey loffe, and ye well thys wer,
Y geffe yow her a golde ryng.”

Gramarsey, seyde the weyffe,
Sir, god eyldē het the.
The screffes hart was never so leythe,
The feyr forest to se.

And when he cam ynto the foreyst,
Yonder the leffes grene,
Berdys ther sange on bowhes prest,
Het was gret goy to sene.

Her het ys merey to be, seyde Roben,
For a man that had hawt to spende:
Be mey horne ‘we’ schall awet
Yeff Roben Hode be ‘ner hande.’

Roben set hes horne to hes mowthe,
And blow a blast that was foll god,
That herde hes men that ther stode,
Fer downe yn the wodde.
I her mey master, seyde Leytyll John:
They ran as thay were wode.

Whan thay to thar master cam,
Leytell John wold not spar :
“ Master, how haffe yow far yn Notynggam ?
“ Haffe yow solde yowr war ?”

“ Ye, be mey trowthe, Leytyll John,
Loke thow take no car ;
Y haffe browt the screffe of Notynggam,
For all howr chaffar.”

He ys foll wellcom, seyde Lytyll John,
Thes tydyng ys foll godde.
The screffe had lever nar a hundred ponde
[He had never sene Roben Hode].

“ Had I west that beforen,
At Notynggam when we wer,
Thow scholde not com yn feyr forest
Of all thes thowsande eyr.”

That wot y well, seyde Roben,
Y thanke god that y be her ;
Therfor schall ye leffe yowr horse with hos,
And all your hother ger.

That fend I godys forbode, kod the screffe,
So to lese mey godde.

“ Hether ye cam on horse foll hey,
And hom schall ye go on fote ;
And gret well they weyffe at home,
The woman ys foll godde.

Y schall her sende a wheyt palfrey,
Het hambellet as the weynde ;
Ner for the loffe of yowr weyffe,
Off mor sorow scholde yow seyng.”

Thes parted Robyn Hode and the screffe,
To Notynggam he toke the waye;
Hes weyffe feyr welcomed hem hom,
And to hem gan sche saye :

Seyr, how haffe yow fared yn grene foreyst ?
Haffe ye browt Roben hom ?
“ Dam, the deyell spede hem, bothe bodey and bon,
Y haffe hade a foll grete skorne.

Of all the god that y haffe lade to grene wod,
He hayt take het fro me,
All bot this feyr palffrey,
That he hayt sende to the.”

With that sche toke ep a lowde lawhyng,
And swhar be hem that deyed on tre ;
“ Now haffe yow payed for all the pottys
That Roben gaffe to me.

Now ye be com hom to Notynggam,
Ye schall haffe god ynowe.”
Now speke we of Roben Hode,
And of the pottyr onder the grene bowhe.

“ Potter, what was they pottys worthe
To Notynggam that y ledde with me ? ”
They wer worth two nobellys, seyde he,
So mot y treyffe or the ;
So cowde y had for tham,
And y had ther be.

Thow schalt hafe ten ponde, seyde Roben,
Of money feyr and fre ;
And yever whan thow comest to grene wod,
Wellcom, potter, to me.

Thes partyd Robyn, the screffe, and the potter,
Ondernethe the grene wod tre.
God haffe mersey on Roben Hodys solle,
And saffe all god yemanrey!





III.

ROBIN HOOD AND THE BEGGAR.

THIS poem, a north-country (or, perhaps, Scottish) composition of some antiquity, is given from a modern copy printed at Newcastle, where it was accidentally picked up: no other edition having been ever seen or heard of. The corruptions of the press being equally numerous and minute, some of the most trifling have been corrected without notice. But it may be proper to mention that each line of the printed copy is here thrown into two: a step which, though absolutely necessary from the narrowness of the page, is sufficiently justified by the frequent recurrence of the double rhyme. The division of stanzas was conceived to be a still further improvement.—The original title is, "A pretty dialogue betwixt Robin Hood and a beggar."

A similar story ("Comment un moine se débarrasse des voleurs") may be found in *Le moyen de parvenir*, i. 304 (edit. 1739).



LYTH and listen, gentlemen,
That be of high born blood,
I'll tell you of a brave booting
That befell Robin Hood.

Robin Hood upon a day,
He went forth him alone,
And as he came from Barnsdale
Into fair evening,

He met a beggar on the way,
Who sturdily could gang;
He had a pike-staff in his hand
That was both stark and strang;

A clouted clock about him was,
That held him frae the cold,
The thinnest bit of it, I guess,
Was more than twenty fold.

His meal-poke hang about his neck,
Into a leathern whang,
Well fasten'd to a broad bucle,
That was both stark and 'strang.'

He had three hats upon his head,
Together sticked fast,
He car'd neither for wind nor wet,
In lands where'er he past.

Good Robin cast him in the way,
To see what he might be,
If any beggar had monèy,
He thought some part had he.

Tarry, tarry, good Robin says,
Tarry, and speak with me.
He heard him as he heard him not,
And fast on his way can hy.

'Tis be not so, says [good] Robin,
Nay, thou must tarry still.
By my troth, said the bold beggar,
Of that I have no will.

It is far to my lodging house,
And it is growing late,
If they have supt e'er I come in
I will look wondrous blate.

Now, by my truth, says good Robin,
I see well by thy fare,
If thou shares well to thy supper,
Of mine thou dost not care,

Who wants my dinner all this day,
And wots not where to ly,
And would I to the tavern go,
I want money to buy.

Sir, you must lend me some money,
Till we meet again.
The beggar answer'd cankardly,
I have no money to lend :

Thou art a young man as I,
And seems to be as sweer;
If thou fast till thou get from me,
Thou shalt eat none this year.

Now, by my truth, says [good] Robin,
Since we are asembled so,
If thou hast but a small farthing,
I'll have it e'er thou go.

Come, lay down thy clouted cloak,
And do no longer stand,
And loose the strings of all thy pokes,
I'll ripe them with my hand.

And now to thee I make a vow,
If 'thou' make any din,
I shall see a broad arròw,
Can pierce a beggar's skin.

The beggar smil'd, and answer made,
Far better let me be;
Think not that I will be afraid,
For thy nip crooked tree;

Or that I fear thee any whit,
For thy curn nips of sticks,
I know no use for them so meet
As to be puding-pricks.

Here I defy thee to do me ill,
For all thy boisterous fair,
Thou's get nothing from me but ill,
Would'st thou seek evermair.

Good Robin bent his noble bow,
He was an angry man,
And in it set a broad arròw;
Lo! e'er 'twas drawn a span,

The beggar, with his noble tree,
Reach'd him so round a rout,
That his bow and his broad arròw,
In flinders flew about.

Good Robin bound him to his brand,
But that prov'd likewise vain,
The beggar lighted on his hand
With his pike-staff again :

[I] wot he might not draw a sword
For forty days and mair.
Good Robin could not speak a word,
His heart was ne'er so sair.

He could not fight, he could not flee,
He wist not what to do ;
The beggar with his noble tree
Laid lusty slaps him to.

He paid good Robin back and side,
And baist him up and down,
And with his pyke-staff laid on loud,
Till he fell in a swoon.

Stand up, man, the beggar said,
'Tis shame to go to rest ;
Stay till thou get thy money told,
I think it were the best :

And syne go to the tavern house,
And buy both wine and ale ;
Hereat thy friends will crack full crouse,
Thou hast been at the dale.

Good Robin answer'd ne'er a word,
But lay still as a stane ;
His cheeks were pale as any clay,
And closed were his een.

The beggar thought him dead but fail,
And boldly bound his way.—
I would ye had been at the dale,
And gotten part of the play.

THE SECOND PART.

Now three of Robin's men, by chance,
Came walking by the way,
And found their master in a trance,
On ground where that he lay.

Up have they taken good Robin,
Making a piteous bear,
Yet saw they no man there at whom
They might the matter spear.

They looked him all round about,
But wound on him saw ' nane,'
Yet at his mouth came bocking out
The blood of a good vain.

Cold water they have gotten syne,
And cast unto his face ;
Then he began to hitch his ear,
And speak within short space.

Tell us, dear master, said his men,
How with you stands the case.
Good Robin sigh'd e'er he began
To tell of his disgrace.

“ I have been watchman in this wood
Near hand this twenty year,
Yet I was never so hard bestead
As ye have found me here ;

A beggar with a clouted clock,
Of whom I fear'd no ill
Hath with his pyke-staff cla'd my back,
I fear 'twill never be well.

See, where he goes o'er yon hill,
With hat upon his head ;
If e'er ye lov'd your master well,
Go now revenge this deed ;

And bring him back again to me,
If it lie in your might,
That I may see, before I die,
Him punish'd in my sight :

And if you may not bring him back,
Let him not go loose on ;
For to us all it were great shame
If he escape again."

" One of us shall with you remain,
Because you're ill at ease,
The other two shall bring him back,
To use him as you please."

Now, by my truth, says good Robin,
I true there's enough said ;
And he get scouth to wield his tree,
I fear you'll both be paid.

" Be not fear'd, our master,
That we two can be dung
With any bluter base beggar,
That has nought, but a rung.

His staff shall stand him in no stead,
 That you shall shortly see,
 But back again he shall be led,
 And fast bound shall he be,
 To see if ye will have him slain,
 Or hanged on a tree."

" But cast you sliely in his way,
 Before he be aware,
 And on his pyke-staff first hands lay,
 Ye'll speed the better far."

Now leave we Robin with his man,
 Again to play the child,
 And learn himself to stand and gang
 By halds, for all his eild.

Now pass we to the bold beggar,
 That raked o'er the hill,
 Who never mended his pace more,
 Then he had done no ill.

• • • • •
 • • • • •

And they have taken another way,
 Was nearer by miles three.

They stoutly ran with all their might,
 Spared neither dub ' nor' mire,
 They started at neither how nor height,
 No travel made them tire,

Till they before the beggar wan,
 And cast them in his way;
 A little wood lay in a glen,
 And there they both did stay;

They stood up closely by a tree,
In each side of the gate,
Untill the beggar came them nigh,
That thought of no such late :

And as he was betwixt them past,
They leapt upon him baith ;
The one his pyke-staff gripped fast,
They feared for its skaith.

The other he held in his sight
A drawn durk to his breast,
And said, False ' carel,' quit thy staff,
Or I shall be thy priest.

His pyke-staff they have taken him frae,
And stuck it in the green,
He was full loath to let it gae,
An better might it been.

The beggar was the feardest man
Of any that e'er might be,
To win away no way he can,
Nor help him with his tree.

Nor wist he wherefore he was ta'en,
Nor how many was there ;
He thought his life days had been gane,
He grew into despair.

Grant me my life, the beggar said,
For him that dy'd on the tree,
And hold away that ugly knife,
Or else for fear I'll die.

I griev'd you never in all my life,
Neither by late or air,
You have great sin if you would slay
A silly poor beggar.

Thou lies, false lown, they said again,
For all that may be sworn ;
Thou hast ' near ' slain the gentlest man
Of one that e'er was born ;

And back again thou shall be led,
And fast bound shalt thou be,
To see if he will have thee slain,
Or hanged on a tree.

The beggar then thought all was wrong,
They were set for his wrack,
He saw nothing appearing then,
But ill upon warse back.

Were he out of their hands, he thought,
And had again his tree,
He should not be led back for nought,
With such as he did see.

Then he bethought him on a wile,
If it could take effect,
How he might the young men beguile,
And give them a begeck.

Thus to do them shame for ill
His beastly breast was bent,
He found the wind blew something shrill,
To further his intent.

He said, Brave gentlemen, be good,
And let a poor man be ;
When ye have taken a beggar's blood,
It helps you not a flee.

It was but in my own defence,
If he has gotten skaith ;
But I will make a recompence
Is better for you baith.

If ye will set me fair and free,
And do me no more dear,
An hundred pounds I will you give,
And much more odd silvèr,

That I have gather'd this many years,
Under this clouted cloak,
And hid up wonder privately,
In bottom of my poke.

The young men to the council yeed,
And let the beggar gae ;
They wist full well he had no speed
From them to run away.

They thought they would the money take,
Come after what so may ;
And yet they would not take him back,
But in that place him slay.

By that good Robin would not know
That they had gotten coin,
It would content him [well] to show
That there they had him slain.

They said, False carel, soon have done,
And tell forth thy monèy,
For the ill turn that thou hast done
It's but a simple plea.

And yet we will not have thee back,
Come after what so may,
If thou will do that which thou spak,
And make us present pay.

O then he loosed his clouted clock,
And spread it on the ground,
And thereon lay he many a poke,
Betwixt them and the wind.

He took a great bag from his hals,
It was near full of meal,
Two pecks in it at least there was,
And more, I wot full well.

Upon this cloak he set it down,
The mouth he opened wide,
To turn the same he made him bown,
The young men ready spy'd ;

In every hand he took a nook
Of that great leathren 'mail,'
And with a fling the meal he shook
Into their face all hail :

Wherewith he blinded them so close,
A stime they could not see ;
And then in heart he did rejoice,
And clap'd his lusty tree.

He thought if he had done them wrong,
In mealing of their cloaths,
For to strike off the meal again
With his pyke-staff he goes.

E'er any of them could red their een,
Or a glimmring might see,
Ilke one of them a dozen had,
Well laid on with his tree.

The young men were right swift of foot,
And boldly bound away,
The beggar could them no more hit,
For all the haste he may.

What's all this haste ? the beggar said,
May not you tarry still,
Untill your money be received ?
I'll pay you with good will.

The shaking of my pokes, I fear,
Hath blown into your een ;
But I have a good pyke-staff here
Can ripe them out full clean.

The young men answered never a word,
They were dum as a stane ;
In the thick wood the beggar fled,
E'er they riped their een :

And syne the night became so late,
To seek him was in vain :
But judge ye if they looked blate
When they cam home again.

Good Robin speer'd how they had sped.

They answered him, Full ill.

That can not be, good Robin says,

Ye have been at the mill.

The mill it is a meat-rife part,

They may lick what they please,

Most like ye have been at the art,

Who would look at your 'claiths.'

They hang'd their heads, they drooped down,

A word they could not speak.

Robin said, because I fell a-sound,

I think ye'll do the like.

Tell on the matter, less or more,

And tell me what and how

Ye have done with the bold beggar

I sent you for right now.

And when they told him to an end,

As i have said before,

How that the beggar did them blind,

What 'mister' presses more ?

* * * * *

And how in the thick woods he fled,

E'er they a stime could see ;

And how they scarcely could win home,

Their bones were baste so sore ;

Good Robyn cry'd, Fy ! out ! for shame !

We're sham'd for evermore.

Altho good Robin would full fain
Of his wrath revenged be,
He smil'd to see his merry young men
Had gotten a taste of the tree.





IV.

ROBIN HOOD AND GUY OF GISBORNE,

Is reprinted from the "Reliques of ancient English poetry," published by Dr. Percy, (Vol. I. p. 81.) who there gives it from his "folio MS." as "never before printed, and 'carrying' marks of much greater antiquity than any of the common popular songs on this subject."

As for Guy of Gisborne, the only further memorial which has occurred concerning him, is in an old satirical piece by William Dunbar, a celebrated Scottish poet, of the 15th century, on one "Schir Thomas Nory," (MS. Maitland, p. 3. MSS. More, Ll. 5. 10.) where he is named along with our hero, Adam Bell, and other worthies, it is conjectured, of a similar stamp, but whose merits have not, less fortunately, come to the knowledge of posterity.

" Was nevir WEILD ROBEINE under bewch,
Nor yitt Roger of Clekkinslewch,
So bauld a bairne as he ;
GY OF GYSBURNE, na Allane Bell,
Na Simones sones of Quhynsell,
Off thocht war nevir so slie."

Gisborne is a market-town in the west riding of the county of York, on the borders of Lancashire.

In the fourth edition of the publication above referred to, which appeared in July 1795, it is acknowledged, that "Some liberties were, by the editor, taken with this ballad, which, in this edition, hath been brought nearer to the folio MS." The new readings have therefore been introduced into the present text.



HAN shaws beene sheene, and shraddes
full fayre,
And leaves both large and longe,
Itt's merrye walkyng in the fayre forrèst
To heare the small birdes songe.

The woodweele sang, and wold not cease,
Sitting upon the spraye,
Soe lowde, he wakened Robin Hood,
In the greenwood where he lay.

Now, by my faye, sayd jollye Robin,
A sweaven I had this night;
I dreamt me of tow wighty yemèn,
That fast with me can fight.

Methought they did me beate and binde,
And tooke my bowe me froe;
Iff I be Robin alive in this lande,
Ile be wroken on them towe.

Sweavens are swift, master, quoth John,
As the wind that blowes ore a hill;
For iff itt be never so loude this night,
To-morrow it may be still.

“ Buske yee, bowne yee, my merry men all,
And John shall goe with mee,
For Ile goe seeke yond wighty yeomèn,
In greenwood where they bee.”

Then they cast on theyr gownes of grene,
And tooke theyr bowes each one;
And they away to the greene forrèst
A shooting forth are gone;

Untill they came to the merry greenwood,
Where they had gladdest to bee,
There they were ware of a wight yeomàn,
His body leaned to a tree.

A sword and a dagger he wore by his side,
Of manye a man the bane;
And he was clad in his capull hyde
Topp and tayll and mayne.

Stand you still, master, quoth Little John,
Under this tree so grene,
And I will go to yond wight yeomàn,
To know what he doth meane.

“ Ah ! John, by me thou settest noe store,
And that I farley finde :
How oft send I my men before,
And tarry my selfe behinde ?

It is no cunning a knave to ken,
And a man but heare him speake ;
And it were not for bursting of my bowe,
John, I thy head wold breake.”

As often wordes they breeden bale,
So they parted Robin and John :
And John is gone to Barnesdale ;
The gates he knoweth eche one.

But when he came to Barnesdale,
Great heavinesse there he hadd,
For he found tow of his own fellòwes,
Were slain both in a slade.

And Scarlette he was flying a-foote
Fast over stocke and stone,
For the proud sheriffe with seven score men
Fast after him is gone.

One shoote now I will shoote, quoth John,
With Christ his might and mayne;
He make yond sheriffe that flyes soe fast,
To stopp he shall be fayne.

Then John bent up his long bende-bowe,
And fetteled him to shoote:
The bow was made of tender boughes,
And fell downe at his foote.

“Woe worth, woe worth thee, wicked wood,
That ever thou grew on a tree!
For now this day thou art my bale,
My boote when thou shold bee.”

His shoote it was but loosely shott,
Yet flewe not the arrowe in vaine,
For itt mett one of the sheriffes men,
Good William a Trent was slaine.

It had bene better of William a Trent
To have bene abed with sorrowe,
Than to be that day in the greenwood slade
To meet with Little John's arrowe.

But as it is said, when men be mett
Fyve can doe more than three,
The sheriffe hath taken Little John,
And bound him fast to a tree.

"Thou shalt be drawn by dale and downe,
And hanged hye on a hill."
But thou mayst fayle of thy purpose, quoth John,
If it be Christ his will.

Lett us leave talking of Little John,
And thinke of Robin Hood,
How he is gone to the wight yeoman,
Where under the leaves he stood.

Good morrowe, good fellowe, sayd Robin so fayre,
Good morrowe, good fellowe, quo' he:
Methinkes by this bowe thou beares in thy hande,
A good archere thou sholdst bee.

I am wilfulle of my waye, quo' the yeman,
And of my morning tyde.
Ile lead thee through the wood, sayd Robin:
Good fellow, Ile be thy guide.

I seeke an outlawe, the straunger sayd,
Men call him Robin Hood;
Rather Ild meet with that proud outlawe
Than fortye pound soe good.

"Now come with me, thou wighty yeman,
And Robin thou soone shalt see:
But first let us some pastime find
Under the greenwood tree.

First let us some masterye make
Among the woods so even,
We may chance to meet with Robin Hood
Here at some unsett steven."

They cutt them down two summer shroggs,
That grew both under a breere,
And sett them threescore rood in twaine,
To shoote the prickes y-fere.

Leade on, good fellowe, quoth Robin Hood,
Leade on, I do bidd thee.
Nay, by my faith, good fellowe, hee sayd,
My leader thou shalt bee.

The first time Robin shot at the pricke,
He mist but an inch it fro :
The yeoman he was an archer good,
But he cold never shoote soe.

The second shoote had the wightye yemàn,
He shot within the garlànd :
But Robin he shott far better than hee,
For he clave the good pricke-wande.

A blessing upon thy heart, he sayd ;
Good fellowe, thy shooting is goode ;
For an thy hart be as good as thy hand,
Thou wert better than Robin Hoode.

Now tell me thy name, good fellowe, sayd he,
Under the leaves of lyne.
Nay, by my faith, quoth bold Robin,
Till thou have told me thine.

I dwell by dale and downe, quoth hee,
And Robin to take Ime sworne ;
And when I am called by my right name
I am Guy of good Gisbòrne.

My dwelling is in this wood, sayes Robin,
By thee I set right nought :
I am Robin Hood of Barnésdale,
Whom thou so long hast sought.

He that had neyther beene kythe nor kin,
Might have seen a full fayre fight,
To see how together these yeomen went
With blades both browne and bright.

To see how these yeomen together they fought
Two howres of a summer's day :
Yett neither Robin Hood nor sir Guy
Them fettled to flye away.

Robin was reachles on a roote,
And stumbled at that tyde ;
And Guy was quicke and nimble withall,
And hitt him ore the left syde.

Ah, deere ladye, sayd Robin Hood tho,
That art both mother and may,
I think it was never man's destinye
To dye before his day.

Robin thought on our ladye deere,
And soone leapt up againe,
And strait he came with a[n] awkwarde stroke
And he sir Guy hath slayne.

He took sir Guy's head by the hayre,
And sticked it upon his bowes end :
" Thou hast beene a traytor all thy life,
Which thing must have an end."

Robin pulled forth an Irish knife,
And nicked sir Guy in the face,
That he was never on woman born
Cold tell whose head it was.

Sayes, Lye there, lye there, now sir Guye,
And with me be not wrothe;
Iff thou have had the worst strokes at my hand,
Thou shalt have the better clothe.

Robin did off his gown of greene,
And on sir Guy did it throwe,
And he put on that capull hyde,
That cladd him topp to toe.

“The bowe, the arrowes, and little horne,
Now with me I will beare;
For I will away to Barnésdale,
To see how my men doe fare.”

Robin Hood sett Guyes horne to his mouth,
And a loude blast in it did blow:
That beheard the sheriffe of Nottingham,
As he leaned under a lowe.

Hearken, hearken, sayd the sheriffe,
I heare nowe tydings good,
For yonder I heare sir Guyes horne blow,
And he hath slaine Robin Hoode.

Yonder I heare sir Guyes horne blowe,
Itt blowes soe well in tyde,
And yonder comes that wightye yeoman,
Cladd in his capull hyde.

Come hyther, come hyther, thou good sir Guy,
Aske what thou wilt of mee.
O I will none of thy gold, sayd Robin,
Nor I will none of thy fee :

But now I have slaine the master, he sayes,
Let me goe strike the knave ;
For this is all the meede I aske ;
Nor no other will I have.

Thou art a madman, sayd the sheriffe,
Thou sholdst have had a knightes fee :
But seeing thy asking hath beene soe bad,
Well granted it shal bee.

When Little John heard his master speake,
Well knewe he it was his steven :
Now shall I be looset, quoth Little John,
With Christ his might in heaven.

Fast Robin hee hyed him to Little John,
He thought to loose him belive ;
The sheriffe and all his companye
Fast after him did drive.

Stand abacke, stand abacke, sayd Robin ;
Why draw you mee so neere ?
It was never the use in our countrye,
One's shrift another shold heere.

But Robin pulled forth an Irish knife,
And losed John hand and foote,
And gave him sir Guyes bow into his hand,
And bade it be his boote.

Then John he took Guyes bow in his hand,
His boltes and arrowes eche one :
When the sheriffe saw Little John bend his bow,
He fettled him to be gone.

Towards his house in Nottingham towne,
He fled full fast away ;
And soe did all the companye :
Not one behind wold stay.

But he cold neither runne soe fast,
Nor away soe fast cold ryde,
But Little John with an arrowe so broad,
He shott him into the ' backe'-syde.





V.

A TRUE TALE OF ROBIN HOOD:

OR,

A briefe touch of the life and death of that renowned outlaw Robert earl of Huntingdon, vulgarly called Robin Hood, who lived and dyed in A.D. 1198. being the 9th year of king Richard the first, commonly called Richard Cœur de Lyon.

Carefully collected out of the truest writers of our English Chronicles: and published for the satisfaction of those who desire truth from falsehood.

BY MARTIN PARKER.

This poem, given from an edition in black letter, printed for I. Clarke, W. Thackeray, and T. Passinger, 1686, remaining in the curious library left by Anthony à Wood, appears to have been first entered on the hall-book of the stationers company, the 29th of February, 1631.

Martin Parker was a great writer of ballads, several of which, with his initials subjoined, are still extant in the Pepysian and other collections. (See "Ancient songs," 1829, ii. p. 263.) Dr. Percy mentions a little miscellany intitled, "The garland of withered roses, by Martin Parker, 1656." The editor has, likewise, seen "The nightingale warbling forth her own disaster, or the rape of Philomela: newly written in English verse by Martin Parker, 1632;" and, on the 24th of November, 1640, Mr. Oulton enters, at Stationers hall, "a book called The true story of Guy earle of Warwicke, in prose, by Martyn Parker."

At the end of this poem the author adds "The epitaph which the prioress of the monastery of Kirkslay in Yorkshire set over Robin Hood, which," he says, " (as is before mentioned) was to be read within these hundred years, though in old

broken English, much to the same sence and meaning." He, gives it thus :

" Decembris quarto die, 1198. anno regni Richardi primi 9.

" Robert earl of Huntington
 " Lies under this little stone,
 " No archer was like him so good ;
 " His wildness named him Robin Hood ;
 " Full thirteen years, and something more,
 " These northern parts he vexed sore ;
 " Such outlaws as he and his men
 " May England never know again."

" Some other superstitious words," he adds, " were in, which I," says he, " thought fit to leave out." Now, under this precise gentleman's favour, one would be glad to know what these same " superstitious words" were ; there not being anything of the kind in Dr. Gale's copy, which seems to be the original, and which is shorter by two lines than the above.



OTH gentlemen, and yeomen bold,
 Or whatsoever you are,
 To have a stately story told
 Attention now prepare :

It is a tale of Robin Hood,
 Which i to you will tell,
 Which being rightly understood,
 I know will please you well.

This Robin (so much talked on)
 Was once a man of fame,
 Instiled earl of Huntington,
 Lord Robin Hood by name.

In courtship and magnificence
 His carriage won him praise,
 And greater favour with his prince
 Than any in ' those ' days.

In bounteous liberality
He too much did excell,
And loved men of quality
More than exceeding well.

His great revenues all he sold
For wine and costly chear;
He kept three hundred bow-men bold,
He shooting lov'd so dear.

No archer living in his time
With him might well compare;
He practis'd all his youthful prime
That exercise most rare.

At last, by his profuse expence,
He had consum'd his wealth;
And, being outlaw'd by his prince,
In woods he liv'd by stealth.

The abbot of Saint Maries rich,
To whom he mony ought,
His hatred to the earl was such
That he his downfall wrought.

So being outlaw'd (as 'tis told)
He with a crew went forth
Of lusty cutters stout and bold,
And robbed in the North.

Among the rest one Little John,
A yeoman bold and free,
Who could (if it stood him upon)
With ease encounter three.

One hundred men in all he got,
With whom (the story says)
Three hundred common men durst not
Hold combat any waies.

They Yorkshire woods frequented much,
And Lancashire also,
Wherein their practises were such
That they wrought muckle woe.

None rich durst travel to and fro,
Though ne'r so strongly arm'd,
But by these thieves (so strong in show)
They still were rob'd and harm'd.

His chiefest spight to th' clergy was,
That liv'd in monstrous pride:
No one of them he would let pass
Along the highway side,

But first they must to dinner go,
And afterwards to shrift:
Full many a one he served so,
Thus while he liv'd by theft.

No monks nor fryers he would let go,
Without paying their fees:
If they thought much to be used so,
Their stones he made them lese.

For such as they the country fill'd
With bastards in those days:
Which to prevent, these sparks did geld
All that came in their ways.

But Robin Hood so gentle was,
And bore so brave a mind,
If any in distress did pass,
To them he was so kind,

That he would give and lend to them,
To help them in their need ;
This made all poor men pray for him,
And wish he well might speed.

The widow and the fatherless
He would send means unto ;
And those whom famine did oppress
Found him a friendly foe.

Nor would he do a woman wrong,
But see her safe convey'd :
He would protect with power strong
All those who crav'd his aid.

The abbot of Saint Maries then,
Who him undid before,
Was riding with two hundred men,
And gold and silver store :

But Robin Hood upon him set,
With his couragious sparks,
And all the coyn perforce did get,
Which was twelve thousand marks.

He bound the abbot to a tree,
And would not let him pass,
Before that to his men and he
His lordship had said mass :

Which being done, upon his horse
He set him fast astride,
And with his face towards his a—
He forced him to ride.

His men were forced to be his guide,
For he rode backward home :
The abbot, being thus villify'd,
Did sorely chafe and fume.

Thus Robin Hood did vindicate
His former wrongs receiv'd :
For 'twas this covetous prelâte
That him of land bereav'd.

The abbot he rode to the king,
With all the haste he could ;
And to his grace he every thing
Exactly did unfold :

And said that if no course were ta'n,
By force or stratagem,
To take this rebel and his train,
No man should pass for them.

The king protested by and by
Unto the abbot then,
That Robin Hood with speed should dye,
With all his merry men.

But e're the king did any send,
He did another feat,
Which did his grace much more offend,
The fact indeed was great :

For in a short time after that
The king's receivers went
Towards London with the coyn they got,
For's highness northern rent :

Bold Robin Hood and Little John,
With the rest of their train,
Not dreading law, set them upon,
And did their gold obtain.

The king much moved at the same,
And the abbot's talk also,
In this his anger did proclaim,
And sent word to and fro,

That whosoever alive or dead
Could bring bold Robin Hood,
Should have one thousand marks well paid
In gold and silver good.

This promise of the king did make
Full many yeomen bold
Attempt stout Robin Hood to take
With all the force they could.

But still when any came to him,
Within the gay green wood,
He entertainment gave to them
With venison fat and good ;

And shew'd to them such martial sport
With his long bow and arrow,
That they of him did give report,
How that it was great sorow

That such a worthy man as he
Should thus be put to shift,
Being a late lord of high degree,
Of living quite bereft.

The king to take him more and more
Sent men of mickle might ;
But he and his still beat them sore,
And conquered them in fight :

Or else with love and courtesie,
To him he won their hearts.
Thus still he liv'd by robbery
Throughout the northern parts ;

And all the country stood in dread
Of Robin Hood and's men :
For stouter lads ne'r liv'd by bread
In those days, nor since then.

The abbot, which before i named,
Sought all the means he could
To have by force this rebel ta'n,
And his adherents bold.

Therefore he arm'd five hundred men,
With furniture compleat ;
But the outlaws slew half of them,
And made the rest retreat,

The long bow and the arrow keen
They were so us'd unto
That still he kept the forrest green
In spight o' th' proudest foe.

Twelve of the abbot's men he took,
Who came to have him ta'n,
When all the rest the field forsook,
These he did entertain

With banqueting and merriment,
And, having us'd them well,
He to their lord them safely sent,
And will'd them him to tell,

That if he would be pleas'd at last
To beg of our good king,
That he might pardon what was past,
And him to favour bring,

He would surrender back again
The mony which before
Was taken by him 'and his' men
From him and many more.

Poor men might safely pass by him,
And some that way would chuse,
For well they knew that to help them
He evermore did use.

But where he knew a miser rich
That did the poor oppress,
To feel his coyn his hands did itch,
He'd have it more or less :

And sometimes, when the high-way fail'd,
Then he his courage rouzes,
He and his men have oft assaild
Such rich men in their houses :

So that, through dread of Robin then,
And his adventurous crew,
The misers kept great store of men,
Which else maintain'd but few.

King Richard, of that name the first,
Sirnamed Cœur de Lyon,
Went to defeat the Pagans curst,
Who kept the coasts of Sion.

The bishop of Ely, chancellor,
Was left a vice-roy here,
Who, like a potent emperor,
Did proudly domineer.

Our chronicles of him report,
That commonly he rode
With a thousand horse from court to court,
Where he would make abode.

He, riding down towards the north,
With his aforesaid train,
Robin and his men did issue forth,
Them all to entertain ;

And with the gallant gray-goose wing
They shew'd to them such play
That made their horses kick and fling,
And down their riders lay.

Full glad and fain the bishop was,
For all his thousand men,
To seek what means he could to pass
From out of Robin's ken.

Two hundred of his men were kill'd,
And fourscore horses good,
Thirty, who did as captives yield,
Were carried to the green wood ;

Which afterwards were ransomed,
For twenty marks a man :
The rest set spurs to horse and fled
To th' town of Warrington.

The bishop, sore intraged, then
Did, in king Richard's name,
Muster up a power of northern men,
These outlaws bold to tame.

But Robin with his courtesie
So won the meaner sort,
That they were loath on him to try
What rigour did import.

So that bold Robin and his train
Did live unhurt of them,
Until king Richard came again
From fair Jerusalem :

And then the talk of Robin Hood
His royal ears did fill ;
His grace admir'd that i' th' green wood
He was continued still.

So that the country far and near
Did give him great applause ;
For none of them need stand in fear,
But such as broke the laws.

He wished well unto the king,
And prayed still for his health,
And never practis'd any thing
Against the common-wealth.

Only, because he was undone
By th' cruel clergy then,
All means that he could think upon
To vex such kind of men,

He enterpriz'd with hateful spleen ;
For which he was to blame,
For fault of some to wreak his teen
On all that by him came.

With wealth that he by roguery got
Eight alms-houses he built,
Thinking thereby to purge the blot
Of blood which he had spilt.

Such was their blind devotion then,
Depending on their works ;
Which if 'twere true, we Christian men
Inferiour were to Turks.

But, to speak true of Robin Hood,
And wrong him not a jot,
He never would shed any man's blood
That him invaded not.

Nor would he injure husbandmen,
That toil at cart and plough ;
For well he knew wer't not for them
To live no man knew how.

The king in person, with some lords,
To Nottingham did ride,
To try what strength and skill affords
To crush this outlaw's pride.

And, as he once before had done,
He did again proclaim,
That whosoever would take upon
To bring to Nottingham,

Or any place within the land,
Rebellious Robin Hood,
Should be preferr'd in place to stand
With those of noble blood.

When Robin Hood heard of the same,
Within a little space,
Into the town of Nottingham
A letter to his grace

He shot upon an arrow head,
One evening cunningly;
Which was brought to the king, and read
Before his majesty.

The tenour of this letter was
That Robin would submit,
And be true liegeman to his grace
In any thing that's fit,

So that his highness would forgive
Him and his merry men all;
If not, he must i' th' green wood live,
And take what chance did fall.

The king would feign have pardoned him,
But that some lords did say,
This president will much condemn
Your grace another day.

While that the king and lords did stay
Debating on this thing,
Some of these outlaws fled away
Unto the Scottish king.

For they suppos'd, if he were ta'n
Or to the king did yield,
By th' commons all the rest of 's train
Full quickly would be quell'd.

Of more than full an hundred men,
But forty tarried still,
Who were resolv'd to stick to him
Let Fortune work her will.

If none had fled, all for his sake
Had got their pardon free ;
The king to favour meant to take
His merry men and he.

But e're the pardon to him came
This famous archer dy'd :
His death and manner of the same
I'le presently describe.

For, being vext to think upon
His followers' revolt,
In melancholy passion
He did recount his fault.

Perfidious traytors ! said he then,
 In all your dangers past
 Have i you guarded as my men,
 To leave me thus at last !

This sad perplexity did cause
 A feaver, as some say,
 Which him unto confusion draws,
 Though by a stranger way.

This deadly danger to prevent,
 He hie'd him with all speed
 Unto a nunnery, with intent
 For his health's-sake to bleed.

A faithless fryer did pretend
 In love to let him blood,
 But he by falshood wrought the end
 Of famous Robin Hood.

The fryer, as some say, did this
 To vindicate the wrong
 Which to the clergy he and his
 Had done by power strong.

Thus dyed he by treachery,
 That could not die by force :
 Had he liv'd longer, certainly
 King Richard, in remorse,

Had unto favour him receiv'd,
 ' His' brave men elevated :
 'Tis pitty he was of life bereav'd
 By one which he so hated.

A treacherous leach this fryer was,
To let him bleed to death ;
And Robin was, methinks, an ass
To trust him with his breath.

His corps the prioress of the place,
The next day that he dy'd,
Caused to be buried, in mean case,
Close by the high-way side.

And over him she caused a stone
To be fixt on the ground,
An epitaph was set thereon,
Wherein his name was found ;

The date o' th' year and day also,
She made to be set there :
That all, who by the way did go,
Might see it plain appear,

That such a man as Robin Hood
Was buried in that place ;
And how he lived in the green wood
And robbed for a space.

It seems that though the clergy he
Had put to mickle woe,
He should not quite forgotten be,
Although he was their foe.

This woman, though she did him hate,
Yet loved his memory ;
And thought it wondrous pittty that
His fame should with him dye.

This epitaph, as records tell,
Within this hundred years,
By many was discerned well,
But time all things out-wears.

His followers, when he was dead,
Were some repriev'd to grace ;
The rest to foreign countries fled,
And left their native place.

Although his funeral was but mean,
This woman had in mind,
Least his fame should be buried clean
From those that came behind.

For certainly, before nor since,
No man e're understood,
Under the reign of any prince,
Of one like Robin Hood.

Full thirteen years, and something more,
These outlaws lived thus ;
Feared of the rich, loved of the poor :
A thing most marvellous.

A thing impossible to us
This story seems to be ;
None dares be now so venturous,
But times are chang'd we see.

We that live in these later days
Of civil government,
If need be, have an hundred ways
Such outlaws to prevent.

In those days men more barbarous were,
And lived less in awe;
Now (god be thanked) people fear
More to offend the law.

No waring guns were then in use,
They dreamt of no such thing;
Our Englishmen in fight did use
The gallant gray-goose wing.

In which activity these men,
Through practise, were so good,
That in those days none equal'd them,
Especially Robin Hood.

So that, it seems, keeping in caves,
In woods and forests thick,
They'd beat a multitude with staves,
Their arrows did so prick:

And none durst neer unto them come,
Unless in courtesie;
All such he bravely would send home
With mirth and jollity:

Which courtesie won him such love,
As i before have told,
'Twas the chief cause that he did prove
More prosperous than he could.

Let us be thankful for these times
Of plenty, truth and peace;
And leave our great and horrid crimes,
Least they cause this to cease.

I know there's many feigned tales
Of Robin Hood and 's crew ;
But chronicles, which seldome fails,
Reports this to be true.

Let none then think this is a lye,
For, if 'twere put to th' worst,
They may the truth of all descry
I' th' reign of Richard the first.

If any reader please to try,
As i direction show,
The truth of this brave history,
He'l find it true I know.

And i shall think my labour well
Bestow'd to purpose good,
When't shall be said that i did tell
True tales of Robin Hood.





PART II.

I.

ROBIN HOOD'S BIRTH, BREEDING, VALOUR, AND MARRIAGE.

FROM a black letter copy in the large and valuable collection of old ballads late belonging to Thomas Pearson, esq. and now in the possession of the duke of Roxburgh. This is the collection mentioned in the Harleian catalogue, and would seem to be the greater part of that originally made by old Bagford (see Hearne's appendix to Hemingi Chartularium, p. 662), another volume or two having come, with the rest of his typographical collections, to the British Museum. The 3 vols. which went to Osborne were probably bought of him by Mr. West, at whose sale they were purchased by major Pearson, by whom the collection was new-arranged, ornamented, and improved.

In reading this song, we are admonished by the editor of the collection of old ballads, printed in 1723, (who thinks it "the most beautiful and one of the oldest extant, written on that subject,") to observe one thing, "and that is, between some of the stanzas we must suppose a considerable time to pass. Clorinda" he says, "might be [thought] a very forward girl, if, between Robin Hood's question and her answer, we did not suppose two or three hours to have been spent in courtship: and between Robin Hood's being entertained at Gamwell-hall, and his having ninety-three bowmen in Sherwood, we must allow some years."

With respect to its antiquity, Dr. Percy, in the new edition of his "*Reliques of ancient English poetry*," (vol. I. p. xcvi.) expresses a very different opinion; since, according to him it "seems of much later date than most of the others, and can scarce be older than the reign of K. Charles I. FOR," says he, "K. James I. had no issue after his accession to the throne of England;" an observation which, if any way to the purpose, is certainly NOT TRUE. "It may even," he continues, "have been written since the restoration, and only express the wishes of the nation for issue on the marriage of their favourite K. Charles II. on his marriage (sic) with the infanta of Portugal." However this may be, the writers having deviated from "all the old traditions concerning this celebrated outlaw," is no proof that he was "ignorant" of them; and that Dr. Percy chooses to "think it is not found in the Pepys collection," only shews conjecture to be easier than investigation. In the second volume of that collection, any person, disposed to the search, will find, at least, TWO COPIES of it, both in black letter.

The full title of the original is: "A new ballad of bold Robin Hood: shewing his birth, breeding, valour, and marriage at Titbury Bull-running. Calculated for the meridian of Staffordshire, but may serve for Derbyshire or Kent."



IND gentlemen, will you be patient
awhile?

Ay, and then you shall hear anon

A very good ballad of bold Robin Hood,
And of his man brave Little John.

In Locksly town, in merry Nottinghamshire,
In merry sweet Locksly town,
There bold Robin Hood he was born and was bred,
Bold Robin of famous renown.

The father of Robin a forrester was,
And he shot in a lusty strong bow
Two north-country miles and an inch at a shot,
As the Pinder of Wakefield does know.

For he brought Adam Bell, and Clim of the Clugh,
And William of 'Clowdesle,'
To shoot with our forrester for forty mark,
And the forrester beat them all three.

His mother was neece to the Coventry knight,
Which Warwickshire men call sir Guy ;
For he slew the blue bore that hangs up at the gate,
Or mine host of the Bull tells a lie.

Her brother was Gamwel, of Great Gamwel-Hall,
A noble house-keeper was he,
Ay, as ever broke bread in sweet Nottinghamshire,
And a 'squire of famous degree.

The mother of Robin said to her husband,
My honey, my love, and my dear,
Let Robin and I ride this morning to Gamwel,
To taste of my brother's good cheer.

And he said, I grant thee thy boon, gentle Joan,
Take one of my horses, I pray :
The sun is arising, and therefore make haste,
For to-morrow is Christmas-day.

Then Robin Hood's father's grey gelding was brought,
And saddled and bridled was he ;
Got-wot a blue bonnet, his new suit of cloaths,
And a cloak that did reach to his knee.

She got on her holyday kirtle and gown,
They were of a light Lincoln green ;
The cloath was homespun, but for colour and make
It might 'have beseemed' our queen.

And then Robin got on his basket-hilt sword,
And his dagger on his tother side ;
And said, My dear mother, let's haste to be gone,
We have forty long miles to ride.

When Robin had mounted his gelding so grey,
His father, without any trouble,
Set her up behind him, and bad her not fear,
For his gelding 'had' oft carried double.

And when she was settled, they rode to their neigh-
And drank and shook hands with themall; [bours,
And then Robin gallopt, and never gave o're,
'Till they lighted at Gamwel-hall.

And now you may think the right worshipful 'squire
Was joyful his sister to see ;
For he kist her, and kist her, and swore a great oath,
Thou art welcome, kind sister, to me.

To-morrow, when mass had been said at the chappel,
Six tables were covered in the hall,
And in comes the 'squire, and makes a short speech,
It was, Neighbours, you're welcome all.

But not a man here shall taste my March beer,
'Till a Christmas carol he does sing.
Then all clapt their hands, and they shouted and sung,
'Till the hall and the parlour did ring.

Now mustard and brawn, roast beef and plumb pies,
Were set upon every table ;
And noble George Gamwel said, Eat and be merry,
And drink too as long as you're able.

When dinner was ended, his chaplain said grace,
And, Be merry, my friends, said the 'squire ;
It rains and it blows, but call for more ale,
And lay some more wood on the fire.

And now call ye Little John hither to me,
For little John is a fine lad,
At gambols and juggling, and twenty such tricks,
As shall make you both merry and glad.

When Little John came, to gambols they went,
Both gentlemen, yeomen, and clown ;
And what do you think ? Why, as true as I live,
Bold Robin Hood put them all down.

And now you may think the right worshipful 'squire
Was joyful this sight for to see ;
For he said, Cousin Robin, thou'st go no more home,
But tarry and dwell here with me :

Thou shalt have my land when I die, and till then,
Thou shalt be the staff of my age.
Then grant me my boon, dear uncle, said Robin,
That Little John may be my page.

And he said, Kind cousin, I grant thee thy boon ;
With all my heart, so let it be.
Then come hither, Little John, said Robin Hood,
Come hither my page unto me :

Go fetch me my bow, my longest long bow,
And broad arrows one, two, or three.
For when 'tis fair weather we'll into Sherwood,
Some merry pastime to see.

When Robin Hood came into merry Sherwood,
He winded his bugle so clear;
And twice five and twenty good yeomen and bold,
Before Robin Hood did appear.

Where are your companions all? said Robin Hood,
For still I want forty and three.
Then said a bold yeoman, Lo, yonder they stand,
All under the green wood tree.

As that word was spoke, Clorinda came by,
The queen of the shepherds was she;
And her gown was of velvet as green as the grass,
And her buskin did reach to her knee.

Her gate it was graceful, her body was straight,
And her countenance free from pride;
A bow in her hand, and a quiver of arrows
Hung dangling by her sweet side.

Her eye-brows were black, ay, and so was her hair,
And her skin was as smooth as glass;
Her visage spoke wisdom, and modesty too:
Sets with Robin Hood such a lass!

Said Robin Hood, Lady fair, whither away?
O whither, fair lady, away?
And she made him answer, To kill a fat buck;
For to-morrow is Titbury day.

Said Robin Hood, Lady fair, wander with me
A little to yonder green bower;
There set down to rest you, and you shall be sure
Of a brace or a 'leash' in an hour.

And as we were going towards the green bower,
Two hundred good bucks we espy'd ;
She chose out the fattest that was in the herd,
And she shot him through side and side.

By the faith of my body, said bold Robin Hood,
I never saw woman like thee ;
And com'st thou from east, or com'st thou from west,
Thou needst not beg venison of me.

However, along to my bower you shall go,
And taste of a forrester's meat :
And when we came thither we found as good cheer
As any man needs for to eat.

For there was hot venison, and warden pies cold,
Cream clouted, and honey-combs plenty ;
And the servitors they were, besides Little John,
Good yeomen at least four and twenty.

Clorinda said, Tell me your name, gentle sir :
And he said, 'Tis bold Robin Hood :
'Squire Gamwel's my uncle, but all my delight
Is to dwell in the merry Sherwood ;

For 'tis a fine life, and 'tis void of all strife.
So 'tis, sir, Clorinda reply'd.
But oh ! said bold Robin, how sweet would it be,
If Clorinda would be my bride !

She blusht at the notion ; yet, after a pause,
Said, Yes, sir, and with all my heart.
Then let us send for a priest, said Robin Hood,
And be married before we do part.

But she said, It may not be so, gentle sir,
For I must be at Titbury feast;
And if Robin Hood will go thither with me,
I'll make him the most welcome guest.

Said Robin Hood, Reach me that buck, Little John,
For I'll go along with my dear;
And bid my yeomen kill six brace of bucks,
And meet me to-morrow just here.

Before he had ridden five Staffordshire miles,
Eight yeomen, that were too bold,
Bid Robin Hood stand, and deliver his buck:
A truer tale never was told.

I will not, faith, said bold Robin; come, John,
Stand by me, and we'll beat 'em all.
Then both drew their swords, and so cut 'em, and
slasht 'em,
That five out of them did fall.

The three that remain'd call'd to Robin for quarter,
And pitiful John begg'd their lives:
When John's boon was granted, he gave them good
And sent them all home to their wives. [counsel,

This battle was fought near to Titbury town,
When the bagpipes baited the bull;
I'm the king of the fiddlers, and I swear 'tis truth,
And I call him that doubts it a gull:*

* For an account of Tutbury bull-running, and the character of king of the minstrels there, see Dr. Plot's "Natural History of Staffordshire," chap. x. § 69. sir J. Hawkins's "History of music," vol. ii. and Blount's "Ancient tenures," by Beckwith, p. 303, 8vo. edit.

For I saw them fighting, and fiddled the while ;
And Clorinda sung " Hey derry down !
The bumkins are beaten, put up thy sword, Bob,
And now let's dance into the town."

Before we came in we heard a great shouting,
And all that were in it look'd madly ;
For some were on bull-back, some dancing a morris,
And some singing *Arthur-a-Bradley*.*

And there we see Thomas, our justices clerk,
And Mary, to whom he was kind ;
For Tom rode before her, and call'd Mary madam,
And kiss'd her full sweetly behind :

And so may your worships. But we went to dinner,
With Thomas and Mary, and Nan ;
They all drank a health to Clorinda, and told her,
Bold Robin Hood was a fine man.

When dinner was ended, Sir Roger, the parson
Of Dubbridge, was sent for in haste :
He brought his mass-book, and he bad them take
And joyn'd them in marriage full fast. [hands,

And then, as bold Robin Hood and his sweet bride
Went hand in hand to the green bower,
The birds sung with pleasure in merry Sherwood,
And 'twas a most joyful hour.

And when Robin came in sight of the bower,
Where are my yeomen ? said he :
And Little John answer'd, Lo, yonder they stand,
All under the green-wood-tree.

* An old and popular ballad.

Then a garland they brought her by two and by two,
And plac'd them all on the bride's head :
The music struck up, and we all fell to dance,
'Till the bride and bridegroom were a-bed.

And what they did there must be counsel to me,
Because they lay long the next day ;
And I had haste home, but I got a good piece
Of bride-cake, and so came away.

Now, out, alas ! I had forgotten to tell ye,
That marry'd they were with a ring :
And so will Nan Knight, or be buried a maiden,
And now let us pray for the king ;

That he may get children, and they may get more,
To govern and do us some good :
And then I'll make ballads in Robin Hood's bower,
And sing 'em in merry Sherwood.





II.

ROBIN HOOD'S PROGRESS TO NOTTINGHAM.

FROM an old black letter copy in the collection of Anthony à Wood. It is there said to go "To the tune of Bold Robin Hood;" and the chorus is repeated in every stanza. To the above title are added the following doggerel lines:

Where hee met with fifteen forresters all on a row,
And hee desired of them some news for to know,
But with crosse grain'd words they did him thwart,
For which at last hee made them smart.



ROBIN HOOD he was and a tall young man,
Derry derry down,
And fifteen winters old;
And Robin Hood he was a proper young man,
Of courage stout and bold.
Hey down, derry derry down.

Robin hee would and to fair Nottingham,
With the general for to dine;
There was hee aware of fifteen forresters,
And a drinking bear, ale, and wine.

What news? What news? said bold Robin Hood.
"What news fain wouldest thou know?"
Our king hath provided a shooting match,
And I'm ready with my bow.

We hold it in scorn, said the forresters,
That ever a boy so young
Should bear a bow before our king,
That's not able to draw one string.

I'll hold you twenty marks, said bold Robin Hood,
By the leave of our lady,
That I'll hit a mark a hundred rod,
And I'll cause a hart to dye.

We'll hold you twenty mark, then said the forresters,
By the leave of our lady,
Thou hit'st not the marke a hundred rod,
Nor causest a hart to dye.

Robin he bent up a noble bow,
And a broad arrow he let flye,
He hit the mark a hundred rod,
And he caused a hart to dye.

Some say hee brake ribs one or two,
And some say hee brake three;
The arrow within the hart would not abide,
But it glanced in two or three.

The hart did skip, and the hart did leap,
And the hart lay on the ground;
The wager is mine, said bold Robin Hood,
If't were for a thousand pound.

The wager's none of thine, then said the forresters,
Although thou beest in haste;
Take up thy bow, and get thee hence,
Lest wee thy sides do baste,

Robin Hood hee took up his noble bow,
And his broad arrows all amain ;
And Robin he laught, and begun [for] to smile,
As hee went over the plain.

Then Robin hee bent his noble bow,
And his broad arrows he let flye,
Till fourteen of these fifteen forresters
Upon the ground did lye.

He that did this quarrel first begin
Went tripping over the plain ;
But Robin he bent his noble bow,
And hee fetcht him back again.

You said I was no archer, said Robin Hood,
But say so now again :
With that he sent another arrow,
That split his head in twain.

You have found mee an archer, saith Robin Hood,
Which will make your wives for to wring,
And wish that you had never spoke the word,
That I could not draw one string.

The people that lived in fair Nottingham
Came running out amain,
Supposing to have taken bold Robin Hood,
With the forresters that were slain.

Some lost legs, and some lost arms,
And some did lose their blood ;
But Robin hee took up his noble bow,
And is gone to the merry green wood.

They carried these forresters into fair Nottingham,
As many there did know ;
They dig'd them graves in their church-yard,
And they buried them all a-row.

•• The paragraph of which the following is an extract appeared in the evening paper intituled "The Star," April 23, 1796: "A few days ago as some labourers were digging in a garden at Fox-lane, near Nottingham, they discovered six human skeletons entire, deposited in regular order side by side, supposed to be part of the fifteen foresters that were killed by Robin Hood. Near the above place anciently stood a church, built in the early ages of Christianity, dedicated to St. Michael, which was totally demolished at the reformation. . . No doubt but the bones in question were properly buried in St. Michael's church-yard. The proprietors of the garden humanely ordered the pit where the bones were found to be filled up, being unwilling to disturb the relics of humanity and the ashes of the dead."





III.

THE JOLLY PINDER OF WAKEFIELD, WITH ROBIN HOOD, SCARLET, AND JOHN.

FROM an old black-letter copy, in A. & Wood's collection, compared with two others in the British Museum, one in black letter. It should be sung "To an excellent tune," which has not been recovered.

Several lines of this ballad are quoted in the two old plays of the "Downfall" and "Death of Robert earle of Huntington," 1601, 4to. b. l. but acted many years before. It is also alluded to in Shakespeare's *Merry Wives of Windsor*, act I. scene 1, and again, in his *Second part of K. Hen. IV.*, act. V. scene 3.

In 1557 certain "ballets" are entered on the books of the stationers company "to John Wallye and Mrs. Toye," one of which is entitled "Of wakefylde and a grene:" meaning apparently the ballad here reprinted.



N Wakefield there lives a jolly pinder,
In Wakefield all on a green,
In Wakefield all on a green:

There is neither knight nor squire, said the pinder,
Nor baron that is so bold,
Nor baron that is so bold,
Dare make a trespass to the town of Wakefield,
But his pledge goes to the pinfeld, &c.

All this beheard three witty young men,
'Twas Robin Hood, Scarlet, and John;
With that they espy'd the jolly pinder,
As he sat under a thorn.

Now turn again, turn again, said the pinder,
For a wrong way you have gone;
For you have forsaken the king's highway.
And made a path over the corn.

O that were a shame, said jolly Robin,
We being three, and thou but one,
The pinder leapt back then thirty good foot,
'Twas thirty good foot and one.

He leaned his back fast unto a thorn,
And his foot against a stone,
And there he fought a long summer's day,
A summer's day so long,
Till that their swords on their broad bucklers,
Were broke fast into their hands.

Hold thy hand, hold thy hand, said bold Robin Hood,
And my merry men, every one;
For this is one of the best pinders,
That ever I tryed with sword.

And wilt thou forsake thy pinder's craft,
And live in the green-wood with me?
"At Michaelmas next my cov'nant comes out,
When every man gathers his fee;

Then I'll take my blew blade all in my hand,
And plod to the green-wood with thee."
Hast thou either meat or drink, said Robin Hood,
For my merry men and me?

I have both bread and beef, said the pinder,
And good ale of the best.
And that is meat good enough, said Robin Hood,
For such unbidden 'guests.'

"O wilt thou forsake the pinder his craft,
And go to the green-wood with me?
Thou shalt have a livery twice in the year,
The one green, the other brown."

"If Michaelmas day was come and gone,
And my master had paid me my fee,
Then would I set as little by him,
As my master doth by me."





IV.

ROBIN HOOD AND THE BISHOP.

"**SHewing** how Robin Hood went to an old womans house and changed cloaths with her to scape from the bishop; and how he robbed the bishop of all his gold, and made him sing a mass. To the tune of, Robin Hood and the stranger." From an old black-letter copy in the collection of Anthony à Wood.



OME, gentlemen all, and listen awhile,
Hey down, down, an a down,
And a story ile to you unfold;
He tell you how Robin Hood served the
bishop,
When he robbed him of his gold.

As it fell out on a sun-shining day,
When Phœbus was in 'his' prime,
Then Robin Hood, that archer good,
In mirth would spend some time.

And as he walk'd the forrest along,
Some pastime for to spy,
There was he aware of a proud bishòp,
And all his company.

O what shall I do, said Robin Hood then,
If the bishop he doth take me?
No mercy he'll show unto me, I know,
But hanged I shall be.

Then Robin was stout, and turned him about,
And a little house there he did spy;
And to an old wife, for to save his life,
He loud began for to cry.

Why, who art thou? said the old woman,
Come tell to me for good.
"I am an out-law, as many do know,
My name it is Robin Hood;

And yonder's the bishop and all his men,
And if that I taken be,
Then day and night he'll work my spight,
And hanged I shall be."

If thou be Robin Hood, said the old wife,
As thou 'dost' seem to be,
I'll for thee provide, and thee I will hide,
From the bishop and his company.

For I remember, 'one' Saturday night,
Thou brought me both shoes and hose;
Therefore I'll provide thy person to hide,
And keep thee from thy foes.

"Then give me soon thy coat of gray,
And take thou my mantle of green;
Thy spindle and twine unto me resign,
And take thou my arrows so keen."

And when Robin Hood was so araid,
He went straight to his company,
With his spindle and twine, he oft lookt behind,
For the bishop and his company.

O who is yonder, quoth Little John,
That now comes over the lee ?
An arrow I will at her let flie,
So like an old witch looks she.

O hold thy hand, hold thy hand, said Robin Hood then,
And shoot not thy arrows so keen ;
I am Robin Hood, thy master good,
And quickly it shall be seen.

The bishop he came to the old woman's house,
And called, with furious mood,
Come let me soon see, and bring unto me
That traitor Robin Hood.

The old woman he set on a milk-white steed,
Himselfe on a dapple gray ;
And for joy he had got Robin Hood,
He went laughing all the way.

But as they were riding the forrest along,
The bishop he 'chanc'd' for to see
A hundred brave bowmen bold,
Stand under the green-wood tree.

O who is yonder, the bishop then said,
That's ranging within yonder wood ?
Marry, says the old woman, I think it to be
A man call'd Robin Hood.

Why, who art thou, the bishop he said,
Which I have here with me?

“Why, I am an old woman, thou cuckoldly bishop,
Lift up my leg and see.”

Then woe is me, the bishop he said,
That ever I saw this day!
He turn’d him about, but Robin stout
Call’d him, and bid him stay.

Then Robin took hold of the bishop’s horse,
And ty’d him fast to a tree;
Then Little John smil’d his master upon,
For joy of that company.

Robin Hood took his mantle from’s back,
And spread it upon the ground,
And out of the bishop’s portmantle he
Soon told five hundred pound.

Now let him go, said Robin Hood.
Said little John, That may not be;
For I vow and protest he shall sing us a mass,
Before that he goe from me.

Then Robin Hood took the bishop by the hand,
And bound him fast to a tree,
And made him sing a mass, god wot,
To him and his yeomandree.

And then they brought him through the wood,
And set him on his dapple gray,
And gave him the tail within his hand,
And bade him for Robin Hood pray.



V.

ROBIN HOOD AND THE BUTCHER.

FROM an old black letter copy in the collection of Anthony à Wood. The tune is, "Robin Hood and the Beggar."



OME, all you brave gallants, listen awhile,
 With hey down, down, an a down,
That are 'this bower' within;
For of Robin Hood, that archer good,
A song I intend for to sing.

Upon a time it chanced so,
 Bold Robin in [the] forrest did 'spy
A jolly butcher, with a bonny fine mare,
 With his flesh to the market did hye.

Good morrow, good fellow, said jolly Robin,
 What food hast [thou], tell unto me?
Thy trade to me tell, and where thou dost dwell,
 For I like well thy company.

The butcher he answer'd jolly Robin,
 No matter where I dwell;
For a butcher I am, and to Nottingham
 I am going, my flesh to sell.

What is [the] price of thy flesh ? said jolly Robin,
Come tell it soon unto me ;
And the price of thy mare, be she never so dear,
For a butcher fain would I be.

The price of my flesh, the butcher repli'd,
I soon will tell unto thee ;
With my bonny mare, and they are not too dear,
Four mark thou must give unto me.

Four mark I will give thee, saith jolly Robin,
Four mark it shall be thy fee ;
The mony come count, and let me mount,
For a butcher I fain would be.

Now Robin he is to Nottingham gone,
His butcher's trade to begin ;
With good intent to the sheriff he went,
And there he took up his inn.

When other butchers they opened their meat,
Bold Robin he then begun ;
But how for to sell he knew not well,
For a butcher he was but young.

When other butchers no meat could sell,
Robin got both gold and fee ;
For he sold more meat for one peny
Then others could do for three.

But when he sold his meat so fast,
No butcher by him could thrive ;
For he sold more meat for one peny
Than others could do for five.

Which made the butchers of Nottingham
To study as they did stand,
Saying, Surely he 'is' some prodigal,
That hath sold his father's land.

The butchers stepped to jolly Robin,
Acquainted with him for to be ;
Come, brother, one said, we be all of one trade,
Come, will you go dine with me ?

Accurst of his heart, said jolly Robin,
That a butcher doth deny ;
I will go with you, my brethren true,
As fast as I can hie.

But when to the sheriff's house they came,
To dinner they hied apace,
And Robin Hood he the man must be
Before them all to say grace.

Pray God bless us all, said jolly Robin,
And our meat within this place ;
A cup of sack so good will nourish our blood :
And so I do end my grace.

Come fill us more wine, said jolly Robin,
Let us be merry while we do stay ;
For wine and good cheer, be it never so dear,
I vow I the reckning will pay.

Come, ' brothers,' be merry, said jolly Robin,
Let us drink, and never give ore ;
For the shot I will pay, ere I go my way,
If it cost me five pounds and more.

This is a mad blade, the butchers then said.

Saies the sheriff, He is some prodigal,
That some land has sold for silver and gold,
And now he doth mean to spend all.

Hast thou any horn beasts, the sheriff repli'd,
Good fellow, to sell unto me ?

" Yes, that I have, good master sheriff,
I have hundreds two or three,

And a hundred aker of good free land,
If you please it to see :
And Ile make you as good assurance of it,
As ever my father made me."

The sheriff he saddled his good palfrèy,
And, with three hundred pound in gold,
Away he went with bold Robin Hood,
His horned beasts to behold.

Away then the sheriff and Robin did ride,
To the forrest of merry Sherwood,
Then the sheriff did say, God bless us this day,
From a man they call Robin Hood !

But when a little farther they came,
Bold Robin he chanced to spy
A hundred head of good red deer,
Come tripping the sheriff full nigh.

" Howlike you my horn'd beasts, good mastersheriff?
They be fat and fair for to see."

" I tell thee, good fellow, I would I were gone,
For I like not thy company."

Then Robin set his horn to his mouth,
And blew but blasts three ;
Then quickly anon there came Little John,
And all his company.

What is your will, master ? then said Little John,
Good master come tell unto me.
“ I have brought hither the sheriff of Nottingham
This day to dine with thee.”

He is welcome to me, then said Little John,
I hope he will honestly pay ;
I know he has gold, if it be but well told,
Will serve us to drink a whole day.

Then Robin took his mantle from his back,
And laid it upon the ground ;
And out of the sheriff's portmantle
He told three hundred pound.

Then Robin he brought him thorow the wood,
And set him on his dapple gray ;
“ O have me commended to your wife at home : ”
So Robin went laughing away.





VI.

ROBIN HOOD AND THE TANNER; OR, ROBIN HOOD MET WITH HIS MATCH:

"A MERRY and pleasant song relating the gallant and fierce combate fought between Arthur Bland, a tanner of Nottingham, and Robin Hood, the greatest and most noblest archer of England. Tune is, Robin Hood and the stranger." From an old black-letter copy in the collection of Anthony à Wood.



N Nottingham there lives a jolly tannèr,
 With a hey down, down, a down, down,
 His name is Arthur-a-Bland;
There is nere a squire in Nottinghamshire
 Dare bid bold Arthur stand.

With a long pike-staff upon his shouldèr,
 So well he can clear his way;
By two and by three he makes them to flee,
 For he hath no list to stay.

And as he went forth, in a summer's morning,
 Into the 'forrest of merry' Sherwood,
To view the red deer, that range here and there,
 There met he with bold Robin Hood.

As soon as bold Robin 'he did' espy,
He thought some sport he would make,
Therefore out of hand he bid him to stand,
And thus to him 'he' spake :

Why, what art thou, thou bold fellow,
That ranges so boldly here?
In sooth, to be brief, thou lookst like a thief,
That comes to steal our king's deer.

For I am a keeper in this forrest,
The king puts me in trust
To look to his deer, that range here and there;
Therefore stay thee I must.

" If thou beest a keeper in this forrest,
And hast such a great command,
' Yet' thou must have more partakers in store,
Before thou make me to stand."

" Nay, I have no more partakers in store,
Or any that I do not need ;
But I have a staff of another oke graff,
I know it will do the deed.

For thy sword and thy bow I care not a straw,
Nor all thine arrows to boot ;
If I get a knop upon the bare scop,
Thou canst as well sh—e as shoote."

Speak cleanly, good fellow, said jolly Robin,
And give better terms to me ;
Else Ile thee correct for thy neglect,
And make thee more mannerly.

Marry gep with a wenion ! quod Arthur-a-Bland,
Art thou such a goodly man ?
I care not a fig for thy looking so big,
Mend thou thyself where thou can.

Then Robin Hood he unbuckled his belt,
And laid down his bow so long ;
He took up a staff of another oke graff,
That was both stiff and strong.

He yield to thy weapon, said jolly Robin,
Since thou wilt not yield to mine ;
For I have a staff of another oke graff,
Not half a foot longer then thine.

But let me measure, said jolly Robin,
Before we begin our fray ;
For I'll not have mine to be longer then thine,
For that will be counted foul play.

I pass not for length, bold Arthur reply'd,
My staff is of oke so free ;
Eight foot and a half, it will knock down a calf,
And I hope it will knock down thee.

Then Robin could no longer forbear,
He gave him such a knock,
Quickly and soon the blood came down,
Before it was ten a clock.

Then Arthur he soon recovered himself,
And gave him such a knock on the crown,
That from every side of bold Robin Hood's head,
The blood came trickling down.

Then Robin raged like a wild boar,
As soon as he saw his own blood :
Then Bland was in hast he laid on so fast,
As though he had been cleaving of wood.

And about, and about, and about they went,
Like two wild bore's in a chase.
Striving to aim each other to maim,
Leg, arm, or any other place.

And knock for knock they lustily dealt,
Which held for two hours and more ;
That all the wood rang at every bang,
They ply'd their work so sore.

Hold thy hand, hold thy hand, said Robin Hood,
And let thy quarrel fall ;
For here we may thrash our bones all to mesh,
And get no coyn at all :

And in the forrest of merry Sherwood
Heareafter thou shalt be free.
" God a mercy for ' nought,' my freedom I bought,
-I may thank my staff, and not thee."

What tradesman art thou ? said jolly Robin,
Good fellow, I prethee me show ;
And also me tell, in what place thou dost dwell :
For both of these fain would I know.

I am a tanner, bold Arthur reply'd,
In Nottingham long have I wrought ;
And if thou'lt come there, I vow and swear,
I will tan thy hide for ' nought.'

God-a-mercy, good fellow, said jolly Robin,
Since thou art so kind and free;
And if thou wilt tan my hide for 'nought,'
I will do as much for thee.

And if thou'lt forsake thy tanner's trade,
And live in the green wood with me,
My name's Robin Hood, I swear by the 'rood,'
I will give thee both gold and fee.

If thou be Robin Hood, bold Arthur reply'd,
As I think well thou art,
Then here's my hand, my name's Arthur-a-Bland,
We two will never depart.

But tell me, O tell me, where is Little John?
Of him fain would I hear;
For we are alide by the mother's side,
And he is my kinsman dear.

Then Robin Hood blew on the beaugle horn,
He blew full lowd and shrill;
But quickly anon appear'd Little John,
Come tripping down a green hill;

O what is the matter? then said Little John,
Master, I pray you tell:
Why do you stand with your staff in your hand?
I fear all is not well.

"O man I do stand, and he makes me to stand,
The tanner that stands thee beside;
He is a bonny blade, and master of his trade,
For soundly he hath tan'd my hide."

He is to be commended, then said Little John,
If such a feat he can do ;
If he be so stout, we will have a bout,
And he shall tan my hide too.

Hold thy hand, hold thy hand, said Robin Hood,
For as I do understand,
He's a yeoman good of thine own blood,
For his name is Arthur-a-Bland.

Then Little John threw his staff away,
As far as he could it fling,
And ran out of hand to Arthur-a-Bland,
And about his neck did cling.

With loving respect, there was no neglect,
They were neither ' nice ' nor coy,
Each other did face with a lovely grace,
And both did weep for joy.

Then Robin Hood took ' them both ' by the hands,
And danc'd round about the oke tree :
" For three merry men, and three merry men,
And three merry men we be :

And ever hereafter as long as we live,
We three will be ' as ' one ;
The wood it shall ring, and the old wife sing,
Of Robin Hood, Arthur, and John."

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VII.

ROBIN HOOD AND THE TINKER.

FROM an old black letter copy in the library of Anthony a Wood. The full title is,

“ A new song to drive away cold winter,
Between Robin Hood and the jovial tinker :
How Robin by a wile
The Tinker he did cheat ;
But at the length as you shall hear
The Tinker did him beat ;
Whereby the same they did then so agree,
They after liv'd in love and unity.

To the tune of, In Summer time.”



IN summer time, when leaves grow green,
Down, a down, a down.
And birds sing on every tree,
Hey down, a down, a down.
Robin Hood went to Nottingham,
Down, a down, a down.
As fast as hee could dree.
Hey down, a down, a down.

And as hee came to Nottingham,
A tinker he did meet,
And seeing him a lusty blade,
He did him kindly greet.

Where dost thou live? quoth Robin Hood,
I pray thee now mee tell:
Sad news I hear there is abroad,
I fear all is not well.

What is that news? the tinker said,
Tell mee without delay:
I am a tinker by my trade,
And do live at Banburà.

As for the news, quoth Robin Hood,
It is but as I hear,
Two tinkers were set ith' stocks,
For drinking ale and 'beer.'

If that be all, the tinker he said,
As I may say to you,
Your news is not worth a f—t,
Since that they all bee true.

For drinking good ale and 'beer,'
You will not lose your part.
No, by my faith, quoth Robin Hood,
I love it with all my heart.

What news abroad? quoth Robin Hood,
Tell me what thou dost hear:
Seeing thou goest from town to town,
Some news thou need not fear.

All the news I have, the tinker said,
I hear it is for good,
It is to seek a bold outlâw,
Which they call Robin Hood.

I have a warrand from the king,
To take him where I can ;
If you can tell me where hee is,
I will make you a man.

The king would give a hundred pound,
That he could but him see ;
And if wee can but now him get,
It will serve thee and mee.

Let me see that warrant, said Robin Hood,
Hee see if it bee right ;
And I will do the best I can
For to take him this night.

That will I not, the tinker said,
None with it I will trust ;
And where hee is if you'll not tell,
Take him by force I must.

But Robin Hood perceiving well
How then the game would go,
“ If you would go to Nottingham,
We shall find him I know.”

The tinker had a crab-tree staff,
Which was both good and strong,
Robin hee had a good strong blade ;
So they went both along.

And when they came to Nottingham,
There they both tooke their inn ;
And they called for ale and wine,
To drink it was no sin.

But ale and wine they drank so fast,
That the tinker hee forgot
What thing he was about to do ;
It fell so to his lot,

That, while the tinker fell asleep,
' Robin ' made haste away,
And left the tinker in the lurch,
For the great shot to pay.

But when the tinker wakenèd,
And saw that he was gone,
He call'd then even for his host,
And thus hee made his moan :

I had a warrant from the king,
Which might have done me good,
That is to take a bold outlâw,
Some call him Robin Hood :

But now my warrant and mony's gone,
Nothing I have to pay ;
And he that promis'd to be my friend,
He is gone and fled away.

That friend you tell on, said the host,
They call him Robin Hood ;
And when that first hee met with you,
He ment you little good.

" Had I but known it had been hee,
When that I had him here,
Th' one of us should have tri'd our might
Which should have paid full dear.

In the mean time I will away,
No longer here Ile bide,
But I will go and seek him out,
Whatever do me betide.

But one thing I would gladly know,
What here I have to pay.”
Ten shillings just, then said the host.
“ Ile pay without delay ;

Or elce take here my working-bag,
And my good hammer too ;
And if that I light but on the knave,
I will then soon pay you.”

The onely way, then said the host,
And not to stand in fear,
Is to seek him among the parks,
Killing of the king's deer.

The tinker hee then went with speed,
And made then no delay,
Till he had found ‘ bold ’ Robin Hood,
That they might have a fray.

At last hee spy'd him in a park,
Hunting then of the deer.
What knave is that, quoth Robin Hood,
That doth come mee so near ?

No knave, no knave, the tinker said,
And that you soon shall know ;
Whether of us hath done any wrong,
My crab-tree staff shall show.

Then Robin drew his gallant blade,
Made then of trusty steel :
But the tinker he laid on so fast,
That he made Robin reel.

Then Robin's anger did arise,
He fought right manfully,
Until he had made the tinker
Almost then fit to fly.

With that they had a bout again,
They ply'd their weapons fast ;
The tinker threshed his bones so sore,
He made him yeeld at last.

A boon, a boon, Robin hee cries,
If thou wilt grant it mee.
Before I do it, the tinker said,
He hang thee on this tree.

But the tinker looking him about,
Robin his horn did blow ;
Then came unto him Little John,
And William Scadlock too.

What is the matter, quoth Little John,
You sit on th' highway side ?
“ Here is a tinker that stands by,
That hath paid well my hide.”

That tinker then, said Little John,
Fain that blade I would see,
And I would try what I could do,
If hee'l do as much for me.

But Robin hee then wish'd them both
They should the quarrel cease,
“ That henceforth wee may bee as one,
And ever live in peace.

And for the jovial tinker's part,
A hundred pounds Ile give
In th' year [for] to maintain him on,
As long as he doth live.

In manhood he is a mettled man,
And a mettle man by trade ;
Never thought I that any man
Should have made mee so afraid.

And if hee will bee one of us,
Wee will take all one fare ;
And whatsoever wee do get,
He shall have his full share.”

So the tinker was content
With them to go along,
And with them a part to take :
And so I end my song.





VIII.

ROBIN HOOD AND ALLIN 'A' DALE.

"Or a pleasant relation how a young gentleman, being in love with a young damsel, 'she' was taken from him to be an old knight's bride: and how Robin Hood, pitying the young man's case, took her from the old knight, when they were going to be married, and restored her to her own love again. To a pleasant northern tune, Robin Hood in the green-wood stood.

Bold Robin Hood he did the young man right,
And took the damsel from the doting knight."

From an old black letter copy in major Pearson's collection.



OME listen to me, you gallants so free,
All you that love mirth for to hear,
And I will tell you of a bold outlâw,
That lived in Nottinghamshire.

As Robin Hood in the forest stood,
All under the green wood tree,
There he was aware of a brave young man,
As fine as fine might be.

The youngster was cloathed in scarlet red,
In scarlet fine and gay;
And he did frisk it over the plain,
And chanted a round-de-lay.

As Robin Hood next morning stood
Amongst the leaves so gay,
There did [he] espy the same young man
Come drooping along the way.

The scarlet he wore the day before
It was clean cast away ;
And at every step he fetcht a sigh,
“ Alack and a well a day ! ”

Then stepped forth brave Little John,
And ‘ Midge ’ the miller’s son,
Which made the young man bend his bow,
When as he see them come.

Stand off, stand off, the young man said,
What is your will with me ?
“ You must come before our master straight,
Under yon green wood tree.”

And when he came bold Robin before,
Robin askt him courteously,
O, hast thou any money to spare
For my merry men and me ?

I have no money, the young man said,
But five shillings and a ring ;
And that I have kept this seven long years,
To have it at my wedding.

Yesterday I should have married a maid,
But she from me was tane,
And chosen to be an old knight’s delight,
Whereby my poor heart is slain.

What is thy name? then said Robin Hood,
Come tell me, without any fail.
By the faith of my body, then said the young man,
My name it is Allin a Dale.

What will thou give me, said Robin Hood,
In ready gold or fee,
To help thee to thy true love again,
And deliver her unto thee?

I have no money, then quoth the young man,
No ready gold nor fee,
But I will swear upon a book
Thy true servant for to be.

“How many miles is it to thy true love?
Come tell me without guile.”
By the faith of my body, then said the young man,
It is but five little mile.

Then Robin he hasted over the plain,
He did neither stint nor lin,
Until he came unto the church,
Where Allin should keep his wedding.

What hast thou here? the bishop then said,
I prithee now tell unto me.
I am a bold harper, quoth Robin Hood,
And the best in the north country.

O welcome, O welcome, the bishop he said,
That musick best pleaseth me.
You shall have no musick, quoth Robin Hood,
Till the bride and the bridegroom I see.

With that came in a wealthy knight,
Which was both grave and old,
And after him a finikin lass,
Did shine like the glistering gold.

This is not a fit match, quod bold Robin Hood,
That you do seem to make here,
For since we are come into the church,
The bride shall chuse her own dear.

Then Robin Hood put his horn to his mouth,
And blew blasts two or three ;
When four and twenty bowmen bold
Came leaping over the lee.

And when they came into the church-yard,
Marching all on a row,
The first man was Allin a Dale,
To give bold Robin his bow.

This is thy true love, Robin he said,
Young Allin, as I hear say,
And you shall be married at ' this ' same time,
Before we depart away.

That shall not be, the bishop he said,
For thy word shall not stand ;
They shall be three times askt in the church,
As the law is of our land.

Robin Hood pull'd off the bishop's coat,
And put it upon Little John ;
By the faith of my body, then Robin said,
This ' cloth ' does make thee a man.

When Little John went into the quire,
The people began to laugh ;
He askt them seven times in the church,
Lest three times should not be enough.

Who gives me this maid ? said Little John.
Quoth Robin Hood, that do I ;
And he that takes her from Allin a Dale,
Full dearly he shall her buy.

And thus having ended this merry wedding,
The bride lookt like a queen ;
And so they return'd to the merry green-wood,
Amongst the leaves so green.





IX.

ROBIN HOOD AND THE SHEPHERD.

“Shewing how Robin Hood, Little John, and the Shepherd fought a sore combat.

The shepherd fought for twenty pound, and Robin for bottle and bag,

But the shepherd stout, gave them the rout, so sore they could not wag.

Tune is, Robin Hood and queen Katherine.”

From two old black letter copies, one of them in the collection of Anthony à Wood, the other in that of Thomas Pearson, esq. At the head of the former is a fine cut of Robin Hood.



LL gentlemen, and yeomen good,

Down, a down, a down, a down,

I wish you to draw near ;

For a story of gallant bold Robin Hood

Unto you I will declare.

Down a, &c.

As Robin Hood walkt the forrest along,

Some pastime for to spie,

There he was aware of a jolly shephèrd,

That on the ground did lie.

Arise, arise, cried jolly Robin,

And now come let me see

What's in thy bag and bottle ; I say,

Come tell it unto me.

“ What’s that to thee ? thou proud fellow,
Tell me as I do stand ;
What hast thou to do with my bag and bottle ?
Let me see thy command.”

“ My sword, which hangeth by my side,
Is my command I know ;
Come, and let me taste of thy bottle,
Or it may breed thy woe.”

“ The devil a drop, thou proud fellow,
Of my bottle thou shalt see,
Until thy valour here be tried,
Whether thou wilt fight or flee.”

What shall we fight for ? cries Robin Hood,
Come tell it soon to me ;
Here is twenty pound in good red gold,
Win it and take it thee.

The shepherd stood all in a maze,
And knew not what to say :
“ I have no money, thou proud fellow,
But bag and bottle ile lay.”

“ I am content, thou shepherd swain,
Fling them down on the ground ;
But it will breed thee mickle pain,
To win my twenty pound.”

“ Come draw thy sword, thou proud fellow,
Thou standest too long to prate ;
This hook of mine shall let thee know,
A coward I do hate.”

So they fell to it, full hardy and sore,
It was on a summer's day,
From ten till four in the afternoon
The shepherd held him play.

Robin's buckler proved his 'chief' defence,
And saved him many a bang,
For every blow the shepherd gave
Made Robin's sword cry twang.

Many a sturdie blow the shepherd gave,
And that bold Robin found,
Till the blood ran trickling from his head,
Then he fell to the ground.

"Arise, arise, thou proud fellow,
And thou shalt have fair play,
If thou wilt yield before thou go,
That I have won the day."

A boon, a boon, cry'd bold Robin,
If that a man thou be,
Then let me have my beugle horn,
And blow but blasts three.

Then said the shepherd to bold Robin,
To that I will agree;
'For' if thou shouldst blow till to-morrow morn,
I scorn one foot to flee.

Then Robin he set his horn to his mouth,
And he blew with mickle main,
Until he espied Little John
Come tripping over the plain.

“ O who is yonder, thou proud fellow,
That comes down yonder hill ?”
“ Yonder is John, bold Robin Hood’s man,
Shall fight with thee thy fill.”

What is the matter ? saies Little John,
Master, come tell to me.
My case is bad, cries Robin Hood,
For the shepherd hath conquered me.

I am glad of that, cries Little John :
Shepherd, turn thou to me ;
For a bout with thee I mean to have,
Either come fight or flee.

“ With all my heart, thou proud fellow,
For it never shall be said
That a shepherd’s hook of thy sturdy look
Will one jot be dismaied.”

So they fell to it, full hardy and sore,
Striving for victorie.
He know, says John, ere we give o’er,
Whether thou wilt fight or flee.

The shepherd gave John a sturdie blow,
With his hook under the chin.
Beshrew thy heart, said Little John,
Thou basely dost begin.

Nay, that is nothing, said the shephèrd,
Either yield to me the daie,
Or I will bang thy back and sides,
Before thou goest thy way.

What, dost thou think, thou proud fellow,
That thou canst conquer me?
Nay, thou shalt know, before thou go,
Ile fight before ile flee.

Again the shepherd laid on him,
‘Just as he first begun.’
Hold thy hand, cry’d bold Robin,
I will yield the wager won.

With all my heart, said Little John,
To that I will agree;
For he is the flower of shepherd swains,
The like I did never see.

Thus have you heard of Robin Hood,
Also of Little John;
How a shepherd swain did conquer them,
The like was never known.





X.

ROBIN HOOD AND THE CURTALL FRYER.

FROM an old black letter copy in the collection of Anthony à Wood; corrected by a much earlier one in the Pepysian library, printed by H. Gosson, about the year 1610; compared with a later one in the same collection. The full title is: "The famous battell betweene Robin Hood and the curtall fryer. To a New Northerne tune."

"The curtall fryer," Dr. Stukely says, "is *cordelier* from the cord or rope which they wore round their waist, to whip themselves with. They were," adds he, "of the Franciscan order." Our fryer, however, is undoubtedly so called from his "curtall dogs," or curs, as we now say. (*Courtault*, F.) In fact, he is no fryer at all, but a monk of Fountains abbey, which was of the Cistercian order.



IN summer time, when leaves grow green,
And flowers are fresh and gay,
Robin Hood and his merry men
[They] were disposed to play.

Then some would leape, and some would runne,
And some would use artillery ;
" Which of you can a good bow draw,
A good archer for to be ?

Which of you can kill a bucke,
Or who can kill a doe ;
Or who can kill a hart of Greece
Five hundreth foot him fro ?”

Will Scadlocke he kild a bucke,
And Midge he kild a doe ;
And Little John kild a hart of Greece,
Five hundreth foot him fro.

God's blessing on thy heart, said Robin Hood,
That hath such a shot for me ;
I would ride my horse a hundred miles,
To find one could match thee.

That caused Will Scadlocke to laugh,
He laught full heartily :
“ There lives a curtall fryer in Fountaines Abby
Will beate both him and thee.

The curtall fryer in Fountaines Abbey
Well can a strong bow draw,
He will beat you and your yeomèn,
Set them all on a row.”

Robin Hood he tooke a solemne oath,
It was by Mary free,
That he would neither eate nor drinke,
Till the fryer he did see.

Robin Hood put on his harnesse good,
On his head a cap of steel,
Broad sword and buckler by his side,
And they became him weele.

He tooke his bow into his hand,
It was made of a trusty tree,
With a sheafe of arrowes at his belt,
And to Fountaine Dale went he.

And comming unto Fountaine Dale,
No farther he would ride ;
There he was aware of the curtall fryer,
Walking by the water side.

The fryer had on a harnesse good,
On his head a cap of steel,
Broad sword and buckler by his side,
And they became him weele.

Robin Hood lighted off his horse,
And tyed him to a thorne :
“ Carry me over the water, thou curtall fryer,
Or else thy life's forlorne.”

The fryer tooke Robin Hood on his backe,
Deepe water he did bestride,
And spake neither good word nor bad,
Till he came at the other side.

Lightly leapt Robin offe the fryer's backe ;
The fryer said to him againe,
Carry me over this water, [thou] fine fellòw,
Or it shall breed thy paine.

Robin Hood took the fryer on his backe,
Deepe water he did bestride,
And spake neither good word nor bad,
Till he came at the other side.

Lightly leapt the fryer off Robin Hood's backe,
Robin Hood said to him againe,
Carry me over this water, thou curtall fryer,
Or it shall breede thy pain.

The fryer tooke Robin on's backe againe,
And stept in to the knee.
"Till he came at the middle streame,
Neither good nor bad spake he,

And comming to the middle streame,
There he threw Robin in :
" And chuse thee, chuse thee, fine fellow,
Whether thou wilt sink or swim."

Robin Hood swam to a bush of broome,
The fryer to a wigger-wand ;
Bold Robin Hood is gone to shore,
And took his bow in his hand.

One of his best arrowes under his belt
To the fryer he let fly ;
The curtall fryer with his steele bucklèr
Did put that arrow by.

" Shoot on, shoot on, thou fine fellow,
Shoot as thou hast begun,
If thou shoot here a summer's day,
Thy marke I will not shun."

Robin Hood shot passing well,
"Till his arrows all were gane ;
They tooke their swords and steele bucklèrs,
They fought with might and maine,

From ten o' th' clock that [very] day,
Till four i' th' afternoon ;
Then Robin Hood came to his knees,
Of the fryer to beg a boone.

“ A boone, a boone, thou curtall fryer,
I beg it on my knee ;
Give me leave to set my horne to my mouth,
And to blow blasts three.”

That I will do, said the curtall fryer,
Of thy blasts I have no doubt ;
I hope thou'lt blow so passing well,
'Till both thy eyes fall out.

Robin Hood set his horne to his mouth,
He blew out blasts three ;
Halfe a hundreth yeomen, with bowes bent,
Came raking over the lee.

Whose men are these, said the fryer,
That come so hastily ?
These are mine, said Robin Hood ;
Fryer, what is that to thee ?

A boone, a boone, said the curtall fryer,
The like I gave to thee ;
Give me leave to set my fist to my mouth,
And to whute whues three.

That will I doe, said Robin Hood,
Or else I were to blame ;
Three whues in a fryer's fist
Would make me glad and faine.

The fryer set his fist to his mouth,
And whuted whues three :
Half a hundred good band-dogs
Came running over the lee.

“ Here’s for every man a dog,
And I myselfe for thee.”
Nay, by my faith, said Robin Hood,
Fryer, that may not be.

Two dogs at once to Robin Hood did goe,
The one behind, the other before,
Robin Hood’s mantle of Lincolne greene
Off from his backe they tore.

And whether his men shot east or west,
Or they shot north or south,
The curtall dogs, so taught they were,
They kept ‘ the ’ arrows in their mouth.

Take up thy dogs, said Little John,
Fryer, at my bidding be.
Whose man art thou, said the curtall fryer,
Comes here to prate with me ?

“ I am Little John, Robin Hood’s man,
Fryer, I will not lie ;
If thou take not up thy dogs soone,
I’le take up them and thee.”

Little John had a bow in his hand,
He shot with might and main ;
Soon halfe a score of the fryer’s dogs
Lay dead upon the plain.

Hold thy hand, good fellow, said the curtal fryer,
Thy master and I will agree ;
And we will have new orders taken,
With all the hast may be.

“ If thou wilt forsake fair Fountaines dale,
And Fountaines Abbey free,
Every sunday throwout the yeere,
A noble shall be thy fee :

And every holiday through the yeere,
Changed shall thy garment be,
If thou wilt goe to faire Nottingham,
And there remaine with me.”

This curtal fryer had kept Fountaines dale,
Seven long yeeres and more,
There was neither knight, lord, nor earle,
Could make him yeeld before.





XI.

ROBIN HOOD AND THE STRANGER.

FROM an old black letter copy in the collection of Anthony à Wood. The title now given to this ballad is that which it seems to have originally born; having been foolishly altered to "Robin Hood newly revived." The circumstances attending the second part will be explained in a note.

The tune is already inserted at the end of "Robin Hood and the Tanner."



OME listen awhile, you gentlemen all,
With a hey down, down, a down, down,
That are this bower within,
For a story of gallant bold Robin Hood,
I purpose now to begin.

What time of day? quod Robin Hood then.
Quoth Little John, 'tis in the prime.
"Why then we will to the green wood gang,
For we have no vittles to dine."

As Robin Hood walkt the forrest along,
It was in the mid of the day,
There he was met of a deft young man,
As ever walkt on the way.

His doublet was of silk, 'tis' said,
His stockings like scarlet shone;
And he walked on along the way,
To Robin Hood then unknown.

A herd of deer was in the bend,
All feeding before his face :
" Now the best of you ile have to my dinner,
And that in a little space."

Now the stranger he made no mickle adoe,
But he bends and a right good bow,
And the best of all the herd he slew,
Forty good yards him froe.

Well shot, well shot, quod Robin Hood then,
That shot it was shot in time ;
And if thou wilt accept of the place,
Thou shalt be a bold yeoman of mine.

Go play the chiven, the stranger said,
Make haste and quickly go,
Or with my fist, besure of this,
Ile give thee buffets sto'.

Thou had'st not best buffet me, quod Robin Hood,
For though I seem forlorn,
Yet I have those will take my part,
If I but blow my horn.

Thou wast not best wind thy horn, the stranger said,
Beest thou never so much in haste,
For I can draw out a good broad sword,
And quickly cut the blast.

Then Robin Hood bent a very good bow,
To shoot, and that he would fain ;
The stranger he bent a very good bow,
To shoot at bold Robin again.

Hold thy hand, hold thy hand, quod Robin Hood,
To shoot it would be in vain ;
For if we should shoot the one at the other,
The one of us may be slain.

But let's take our swords and our broad bucklers,
And gang under yonder tree.
As I hope to be sav'd, the stranger he said,
One foot I will not flee.

Then Robin Hood lent the stranger a blow,
'Most scar'd him out of his wit :
Thou never felt blow, the stranger he said,
That shall be better quit.

The stranger he drew out a good broad sword,
And hit Robin on the crown,
That from every haire of bold Robin's head
The blood ran trickling down.

God a mercy, good fellow ! quod Robin Hood then,
And for this that thou hast done,
Tell me, good fellow, what thou art,
Tell me where thou doest won.

The stranger then answered bold Robin Hood,
He tell thee where I do dwell ;
In Maxwell town I was bred and born,
My name is young Gamwell.

For killing of my own father's steward,
I am forc'd to this English wood,
And for to seek an uncle of mine,
Some call him Robin Hood.

“ But ‘art thou’ a cousin of Robin Hood then ?

The sooner we should have done.”

As I hope to be sav’d, the stranger then said,

I am his own sister’s son.

But, lord ! what kissing and courting was there,

When these two cousins did greet !

And they went all that summer’s day,

And Little John did [not] meet.

But when they met with Little John,

He ‘unto them’ did say,

O master, pray where have you been,

You have tarried so long away ?

I met with a stranger, quod Robin Hood,

Full sore he hath beaten me.

Then I’le have a bout with him, quod Little John,

And try if he can beat me.

Oh [no], oh no, quoth Robin Hood then,

Little John, it may [not] be so ;

For he is my own dear sister’s son,

And cousins I have no mo.

But he shall be a bold yeoman of mine,

My chief man next to thee ;

And I Robin Hood, and thou Little John,

And ‘Scadlock’ he shall be.

And weel be three of the bravest outlaws

That live in the north country.

If ‘you will’ hear more of bold Robin Hood,

In ‘the’ second part it will be.

[PART THE SECOND.*]

Now Robin Hood, Will Scadlock, and Little John,
Are walking over the plain,
With a good fat buck, which Will Scadlock
With his strong bow had slain.

Jog on, jog on, cries Robin Hood,
The day it runs full fast ;
For tho' my nephew me a breakfast gave,
I have not yet broke my fast.

Then to yonder lodge let us take our way,
I think it wondrous good,
Where my nephew by my bold yeomèn
Shall be welcom'd unto the green-wood.

With that he took ' his' bugle-horn,
Full well he could it blow ;
Streight from the woods came marching down
One hundred tall fellows and mo.

Stand, stand to your arms, says Will Scadlòck,
Lo ! the enemies are within ken.
With that Robin Hood he laugh'd aloud,
Crying, They are my bold yeomèn.

* This (from an old black letter copy in major Pearson's collection) is evidently the genuine second part of the present ballad ; although constantly printed as an independent article, under the title of " Robin Hood, Will Scadlock, and Little John."

Who, when they arriv'd, and Robin espy'd,
Cry'd, Master, what is your will?
We thought you had in danger been,
Your horn did sound so shrill.

Now nay, now nay, quoth Robin Hood,
The danger is past and gone;
I would have you welcome my nephew here,
That has paid me two for one.

In feasting and sporting they passed the day,
Till Phœbus sunk into the deep;
Then each one to his quarters hy'd,
His guard there for to keep.

Long had they not walked within the green-wood
But Robin he soon espy'd,
A beautiful damsel all alone,
That on a black palfrey did ride.

Her riding-suit was of a sable hew black,
Cypress over her face,
Through which her rose-like cheeks did blush,
All with a comely grace.

Come tell me the cause, thou pretty one,
Quoth Robin, and tell me aright,
From whence thou comest, and whither thou goest,
All in this mournful plight?

From London I came, the damsel reply'd,
From London upon the Thames,
Which circled is, O grief to tell!
Besieg'd with foreign arms,

By the proud prince of Arragon,
Who swears by his martial hand
To have the princess to his spouse,
Or else to waste this land ;

Except such champions can be found,
That dare fight three to three,
Against the prince, and giants twain,
Most horrid for to see ;

Whose grisly looks, and eyes like brands,
Strike terror where they come,
With serpents hissing on their helms,
Instead of feathered plume.

The princess shall be the victor's prize,
The king hath vow'd and said,
And he that shall the conquest win,
Shall have her to his bride.

Now we are four damsels sent abroad,
To the east, west, north, and south,
To try whose fortune is so good
To find these champions ' out.'

But all in vain we have sought about,
For none so bold there are
That dare adventure life and blood,
To free a lady fair.

When is the day ? quoth Robin Hood,
Tell me this and no more.
On Midsummer next, the dam'sel said,
Which is June the twenty-four.

With that the tears trickled down her cheeks,
And silent was her tongue ;
With sighs and sobs she took her leave,
Away her palfrey sprung.

The news struck Robin to the heart,
He fell down on the grass,
His actions and his troubled mind
Shew'd he perplexed was.

Where lies your grief? quoth Will 'Scadlòck,'
O master, tell to me :
If the damsel's eyes have pierc'd your heart,
I'll fetch her back to thee.

Now nay, now nay, quoth Robin Hood,
She doth not cause my smart ;
But 'tis the poor distressed princess,
That wounds me to the heart :

I'll go fight the [prince and] giants all,
To set the lady free.
The devil take my soul, quoth Little John,
If I part with thy company.

Must I stay behind? quoth Will Scadlòck,
No, no, that must not be ;
I'll make the third man in the fight,
So we shall be three to three.

These words cheer'd Robin to the heart,
Joy shone within his face,
Within his arms he hugg'd them both,
And kindly did imbrace.

Quoth he, We'll put on mothley grey,
And long staves in our hands,
A scrip and bottle by our sides,
As come from the holy land.

So may we pass along the high-way,
None will ask us from whence we came,
But take us pilgrims for to be,
Or else some holy men.

Now they are on their journey gone,
As fast as they may speed,
Yet for all their haste, ere they arriv'd,
The princess forth was led,

To be deliver'd to the prince,
Who in the list did stand,
Prepar'd to fight, or else receive
His lady by the hand.

With that he walk'd about the lists,
With giants by his side :
Bring forth, said he, your champions,
Or bring me forth my bride.

This is the four and twentieth day,
The day prefixt upon :
Bring forth my bride, or London burns,
I swear by 'Alcaron.'

Then cries the king, and queen likewise,
Both weeping as they 'spake,'
Lo ! we have brought our daughter dear,
Whom we are forc'd to forsake.

With that stept out bold Robin Hood,
Crys, My liege, it must not be so :
Such beauty as the fair princèss,
Is not for a tyrant's mow.

The prince he then began to storm,
Cries Fool, fanatick, baboon !
How dare thou stop my valour's prize ?
I'll kill thee with a frown.

Thou tyrant Turk, thou infidel,
Thus Robin began to reply,
Thy frowns I scorn ; lo ! here's my gage,
And thus I thee defie.

And for those two Goliahs there,
That stand on either side,
Here are two little Davids by,
That soon can tame their pride.

Then the king did for armour send,
For lances, swords, and shields ;
And thus all three in armour bright,
Came marching to the field.

The trumpets began to sound a charge,
Each singled out his man ;
Their arms in pieces soon were hew'd,
Blood sprang from every vain.

The prince he reacht Robin Hood a blow,
He struck with might and main,
Which forc'd him to reel about the field,
As though he had been slain.

God-a-mercy, quoth Robin, for that blow !
The quarrel shall soon be try'd ;
This stroke shall shew a full divorce
Betwixt thee and thy bride.

So from his shoulders he's cut his head,
Which on the ground did fall,
And grumbling sore at Robin Hood,
To be so dealt withal.

The giants then began to rage
To see their prince lie dead :
Thou's be the next, quoth Little John,
Unless thou well guard thy head.

With that his faulchion he wherl'd about,
It was both keen and sharp ;
He clave the giant to the belt,
And cut in twain his heart.

Will Scadlock well had play'd his part,
The giant he had brought to his knee ;
Quoth Will, The devil cannot break his fast,
Unless he have you all three.

So with his faulchion he run him through,
A deep and 'ghastly' wound ;
Who dam'd and foam'd, curst and blasphem'd,
And then fell to the ground.

Now all the lists with shouts were fill'd,
The skies they did resound,
Which brought the princess to herself,
Who had fal'n in a swoond.

The king and queen, and princess fair,
Came walking to the place,
And gave the champions many thanks,
And did them further grace.

Tell me, quoth the king, whence you are,
That thus disguised came,
Whose valour speaks that noble blood
Doth run through every vein.

A boon, a boon, quoth Robin Hood,
On my knees I beg and crave.
By my crown, quoth the king, I grant,
Ask what, and thou shalt have.

Then pardon I beg for my merry men,
Which are in the green-wood,
For Little John, and Will Scadlock,
And for me, bold Robin Hood.

Art thou Robin Hood? quoth the king;
For the valour thou hast shewn,
Your pardons I do freely grant,
And welcome every one,

The princess I promise the victor's prize,
She cannot have you all three.
She shall chuse, quoth Robin. Said Little John,
Then little share falls to me.

Then did the princess view all three,
With a comely lovely grace,
And took Will Scadlock by the hand,
Saying, Here I make my choice.

With that a noble lord stept forth,
Of Maxfield earl was he,
Who look'd Will Scadlock in the face,
And wept most bitterly.

Quoth he, I had a son like thee,
Whom I lov'd wondrous well,
But he is gone, or rather dead,
His name it is young Gamwell.

Then did Will Scadlock fall on his knees,
Cries, Father! father! here,
Here kneels your son, your young Gamwell,
You said you lov'd so dear.

But, lord! what imbracing and kissing was there,
When all these friends were met!
They are gone to the wedding, and so to [the] bedding:
And so I bid you good night.





XII.

ROBIN HOOD AND QUEEN KATHERINE.

FROM an old black letter copy in a private collection, compared with another in that of Anthony à Wood. The full title is: "Renowned Robin Hood; Or, His famous archery truly related in the worthy exploits he acted before queen Katherine, he being an outlaw man; and how he obtained his own and his fellows' pardon. To a new tune."

It is scarcely worth observing that there was no queen-consort named KATHERINE before Henry the fifth's time; but as Henry the eighth had no less than three wives so called, the name would be sufficiently familiar to our ballad maker.



OLD tane from the king's harbengers,
 Downe, a downe, a downe,
As seldome hath beene scene,
 Downe, a downe, a downe,
And carried by bold Robin Hood
For a present to the queene,
 Downe, a downe, a downe.

If that I live a yeare to an end,
Thus can queene Katherine say,
Bold Robin Hood, I will be thy friend,
And all thy yeomen gay.

The queene is to her chamber gone,
 As fast as she can wen;
 She calls unto her lovely page,
 His name was Richard Patrington.

“ Come thou hither to mee, thou lovely page,
 Come thou hither to mee;
 For thou must post to Nottingham,
 As fast as thou can dree;

And as thou goest to Nottingham,
 Search all the English wood,
 Enquire of one good yeoman or another,
 That can tell thee of Robin Hood.”

Sometimes hee went, sometimes hee ran,
 As fast as hee could win;
 And when hee came to Nottingham,
 There hee tooke up his inne.

And when he came to Nottingham,
 And had tooke up his inne,
 He cald for a pottle of Rhenish wine,
 And dranke a health to his queene.

There sate a yeoman by his side,
 Tell mee, sweet page, said hee,
 What is thy businesse and the cause,
 So far in the north countrey?

This is my businesse and the cause,
 Sir, I’le tell it you for good,
 To enquire of one good yeoman or another,
 To tell mee of Robin Hood.

“ Ile get my horse betimes in the morne,
By it be break of day,
And I will shew thee bold Robin Hood,
And all his yeomen gay.”

When that he came at Robin Hood's place,
Hee fell down on his knee :
“ Queen Katherine she doth greet you well,
She greets you well by mee ;

She bids you post to fair London court,
Not fearing any thing ;
For there shall be a little sport,
And she hath sent you her ring.”

Robin Hood tooke his mantle from his back,
It was of the Lincolne greene,
And sent it by this lovely page,
For a present unto the queene.

In summer time, when leaves grow green,
It's a seemely sight to see,
How Robin Hood himselfe had drest,
And all his yeomandry.

He clothed his men in Lincolne greene,
And himselfe in scarlet red ;
Blacke hats, white feathers, all alike,
Now bold Robin Hood is rid :

And when hee came at London's court,
Hee fell downe on his knee.
Thou art welcome, Locksly, said the queen,
And all thy good ' yeomandree.'

The king is into Finsbury field*
 Marching in battle-ray,
 And after follows bold Robin Hood,
 And all his yeomen gay.

Come hither, Tepus, said the king,
 Bow-bearer after mee ;
 Come measure me out with this line,
 How long our mark must be.

What is the wager ? said the queene,
 That must I now know here.
 " Three hundred tun of Rhenish wine,
 Three hundred tun of beere ;

Three hundred of the fattest harts
 That run on Dallom-lee."
 That's a princely wager, said the king,
 That needs must I tell thee.

With that bespake one Clifton then,
 Full quickly and full soone,
 Measure no markes for us, most soveraigne liege,
 Wee'l shoot at sun and moone.

" Full fifteene score your marke shall be,
 Full fifteene score shall stand."
 He lay my bow, said Clifton then,
 He cleave the willow wand.

With that the king's archers led about,
 While it was three, and none ;
 With that the ladies began to shout,
 " Madam, your game is gone."

* Ground near Moorfields, London, famous in old times for the archery practised there.

A boone, a boone, queene Katherine cries,
I crave it on my bare knee ;
Is there any knight of your privy counsell
Of queen Katherine's part will be ?

Come hither to mee, sir Richard Lee,
Thou art a knight full good ;
For I do knowe by thy pedigree
Thou sprung'st from Gower's blood.

Come hither to me, thou bishop of Herefordshire ;
For a noble priest was hee.
By my silver miter, said the bishop then,
He not bet one peny.

The king hath archers of his own,
Full ready and full light,
And these be strangers every one,
No man knowes what they hight.

What wilt thou bet ? said Robin Hood,
Thou seest our game the worse.
By my silver miter, then said the bishop,
All the money within my purse.

What is in thy purse ? said Robin Hood,
Throw it downe on the ground.
Fifteen score nobles, said the bishop,
It's neere an hundred pound.

Robin Hood took his bagge from his side,
And threw it downe on the greene ;
William Scadlocke then went smiling away,
" I know who this money must win."

With that the king's archers led about,
While it was three and three ;
With that the ladies gave a shout,
" Woodcock, beware thy knee !"

It is three and three, now, said the king,
The next three pays for all.
Robin Hood went and whisper'd the queen,
The king's part shall be but small.

Robin Hood hee led about,
Hee shot it under hand ;
And Clifton with a bearing arrow,
Hee clave the willow wand.

And little Midge, the miller's son,
Hee shot not much the worse ;
He shot within a finger of the prick :
" Now, bishop, beware thy purse !"

A-boone, a boone, queen Katherine cries,
Beware 'it' on my bare knee,
That you will angry be with none
That are of my partie.

" They shall have forty daies to come,
And forty daies to goe,
And three times forty to sport and play ;
Then welcome friend or foe."

Thou art welcome, Robin Hood, said the queene,
And so is Little John,
And so is Midge, the miller's son ;
Thrice welcome every one.

Is this Robin Hood? now said the king,
For it was told to me
That he was slain in the palace gates,
So far in the north country.

Is this Robin Hood? quoth the bishop then,
As 'it seems' well to be:
Had I knowne 'it' had been that bold outlâw,
I would not [have] bet one peny.

Hee tooke me late one Saturday at night,
And bound mee fast to a tree,
And made mee sing a masse, God wot,
To him and his 'yeomandree.'

What, an if I did, saies Robin Hood,
Of that masse I was faine;
For recompence of that, he saies,
Here's halfe thy gold againe.

Now nay, now nay, saies Little John,
Master, that shall not be;
We must give gifts to the king's officers;
That gold will serve thee and mee.





XIII.

ROBIN HOOD'S CHASE :

"OR, a merry progress between Robin Hood and King Henry. Shewing how Robin Hood led the king his chase from London to London ; and when he had taken his leave of the queen, he returned to merry Sherwood. To the tune of Robin Hood and the beggar."

From an old black letter copy in the collection of Anthony à Wood.



OME, you gallants all, to you I do call,
With hey down, down, an a down,
That now 'are' in this place ;
For a song I will sing of Henry the king,
How he did Robin Hood chase.

Queen Katherin she a match did make,
As plainly doth appear,
For three hundred tun of good red wine,
And three [hundred] tun of beere.

But yet her archers she had to seek,
With their bows and arrows so good ;
But her mind it was bent with a good intent,
To send for bold Robin Hood.

But when bold Robin he came there,
Queen Katherin she did say,
Thou art welcome, Locksley, said the queen,
And all thy yeomen gay.

For a match of shooting I have made,
And thou on my part must be.
“If I miss the mark, be it light or dark,
Then hanged I will be.”

But when the game came to be played,
Bold Robin he then drew nigh,
With his mantle of green, most brave to be seen,
He let his arrows fly.

And when the game it ended was,
Bold Robin wan it with a grace;
But after the king was angry with him,
And vowed he would him chace.

What though his pardon granted was,
While he with him did stay;
But yet the king was vexed at him,
When as he was gone his way.

Soon after the king from the court did hye,
In a furious angry mood,
And often enquired both far and near
After bold Robin Hood.

But when the king to Nottingham came,
Bold Robin was in the wood:
O, come now, said he, and let me see
Who can find me bold Robin Hood.

But when that bold Robin he did hear
The king had him in chase,
Then said Little John, 'Tis time to be gone,
And go to some other place.

And away they went from merry Sherwood,
And into Yorkshire he did hye;
And the king did follow, with a hoop and a hallow,
But could not come him nigh.

Yet jolly Robin he passed along,
' And went strait' to Newcastle town;
And there 'he' stayed hours two or three,
And 'then' to Barwick 'is' gone.

When the king did see how Robin did flee,
He was vexed wondrous sore;
With a hoop and a hallow he vowed to follow,
And take him, or never give ore.

Come now let's away, then crys Little John,
Let any man follow that dare;
To Carlisle we'l hye, with our company,
And so then to Lancaster.

From Lancaster then to Chester they went,
And so did king Henry;
But Robin [went] away, for he durst not stay,
For fear of some treachery.

Says Robin, Come let us for London goe,
To see our noble queen's face,
It may be she wants our company,
Which makes the king so us chase.

When Robin he came queene Katherin before,
He fell low upon his knee :
“ If it please your grace, I am come to this place
For to speak with king Henry.”

Queen Katherine answered bold Robin again,
The king is gone to merry Sherwood ;
And when he went away to me he did say,
He would go and seek Robin Hood.

“ Then fare you well, my gracious queen,
For to Sherwood I will hye apace ;
For fain would I see what he would with me,
If I could but meet with his grace.”

But when king Henry he came home,
Full weary, and vexed in mind,
And that he did hear Robin had been there,
He blamed dame Fortune unkind.

You're welcome home, ‘ queen ’ Katherin cried,
Henry, my sovereign liege ;
Bold Robin Hood, that archer good,
Your person hath been to seek.

But when king Henry he did ‘ hear,’
That Robin had been there him to seeke,
This answer he gave, He’s a cunning knave,
For I have sought him this whole three weeks.

A boon ! a boon ! ‘ queen ’ Katherin cry’d,
I beg it here ‘ of ’ your grace,
To pardon his life, and seek not strife :
And so endeth Robin Hood’s chase.



XIV.

ROBIN HOOD'S GOLDEN PRIZE.

THIS ballad (given from an old black letter copy in the collection of Anthony à Wood) was entered (amongst others) in the stationers' book, by Francis Coule, 13th June, 1631; and by Francis Grove, 2nd June, 1656.



HAVE heard talk of Robin Hood,
Derry, derry down,
And of brave Little John,
Of fryer Tuck, and Will Scarlet,
Loxely, and maid Mariòn.

But such a tale as this before
I think was never knone;
For Robin Hood disguised himself,
And 'from' the wood is gone.

Like to a fryer bold Robin Hood
Was accoutered in his array;
With hood, gown, beeds, and crucifix,
He past upon the way.

He had not gone miles two or three,
But it was his chance to spy
Two lusty priests, clad all in black,
Come riding gallantly.

Benedicite, then said Robin Hood,
Some pitty on me take ;
Cross you my hand with a silver groat,
For our dear ladies sake.

For I have been wandring all this day,
And nothing could I get ;
Not so much as one poor cup of drink,
Nor bit of bread to eat.

Now, by our holy dame, the priests repli'd,
We never a peny have ;
For we this morning have been rob'd,
And could no money save.

I am much afraid, said bold Robin Hood,
That you both do tell a lie ;
And now before you do go hence,
I am resolv'd to try.

When as the priests heard him say so,
Then they rode away amain ;
But Robin Hood betook to his heels,
And soon overtook them again.

Then Robin Hood laid hold of them both,
And pull'd them down from their horse :
O spare us, fryer ! the priests cry'd out,
On us have some remorse !

You said you had no mony, quoth he,
Wherefore, without delay,
We three will fall down on our knees,
And for mony we will pray.

The priests they could not him gainsay,
But down they kneeled with speed :
Send us, O send us, then quoth they,
Some mony to serve our need.

The priests did pray with a mournful chear,
Sometimes their hands did wring ;
Sometimes they wept, and cried aloud,
Whilst Robin did merrily sing.

When they had been praying an hour's space,
The priests did still lament ;
Then quoth bold Robin, Now let's see
What mony heaven hath us sent.

We will be sharers a'l alike
Of [the] mony that we have ;
And there is never a one of us
That his fellow shall deceive.

The priests their hands in their pockets put,
But mony would find none :
We'l search ourselves, said Robin Hood,
Each other, one by one.

Then Robin took pains to search them both,
And he found good store of gold,
Five hundred peeces presently
Upon the grass was told.

Here is a brave show, said Robin Hood,
Such store of gold to see,
And you shall each one have a part,
Cause you prayed so heartily.

He gave them fifty pounds a-peece,
And the rest for himself did keep :
The priests [they] durst not speak one word,
But they sighed wondrous deep.

With that the priests rose up from their knees,
Thinking to have parted so :
Nay, nay, says Robin Hood, one thing more
I have to say ere you go.

You shall be sworn, said bold Robin Hood,
Upon this holy grass,
That you will never tell lies again,
Which way soever you pass.

The second oath that you here must take,
That all the days of your lives,
You shall never tempt maids to sin,
Nor lye with other men's wives.

The last oath you shall take, it is this,
Be charitable to the poor ;
Say, you have met with a holy fryar,
And I desire no more.

He set them on their horses again,
And away then they did ride ;
And he return'd to the merry green-wood,
With great joy, mirth, and pride.



XV.

ROBIN HOOD'S RESCUING WILL STUTLY.

FROM an old black letter copy in the collection of Anthony à Wood. The full title is: "Robin Hood his rescuing Will Stutly from the sheriff and his men, who had taken him prisoner, and was going to hang him. To the tune of Robin Hood and queen Katherine."



WHEN Robin Hood in the green wood liv'd,

Derry, derry down,

Under the green wood tree,

Tidings there came to him with speed,

Tidings for certainty,

Hey down, derry, derry, down,

That Will Stutly surprized was,

And eke in prison lay;

Three varlets that the sheriff had hired,

Did likely him betray,

"I, and to-morrow hanged must be,

To-morrow as soon as it is day;

Before they could this victory get,

Two of them did Stutly slay."

When Robin Hood he heard this news,
Lord ! he was grieved sore ;
And to his merry men he did say,
(Who altogether swore)

That Will Stutly should rescued be,
And be brought ' back ' again ;
Or else should many a gallant wight
For his sake there be slain.

He clothed himself in scarlet ' red,'
His men were all in green ;
A finer shew, throughout the world,
In no place could be seen.

Good lord ! it was a gallant sight
To see them all on a row ;
With every man a good broad sword,
And eke a good yew bow.

Forth of the green wood are they gone,
Yea all couragiously,
Resolving to bring Stutly home,
Or every man to die.

And when they came the castle neer,
Whereas Will Stutly lay,
I hold it good, saith Robin Hood,
Wee here in ambush stay,

And send one forth some news to hear,
To yonder palmer fair,
That stands under the castle wall,
Some news he may declare.

With that steps forth a brave young man,
Which was of courage bold,
Thus did hee speak to the old man :
I pray thee, palmer old,

Tell me, if that thou rightly ken,
When must Will Stutly die,
Who is one of bold Robin's men,
And here doth prisoner lie ?

Alack ! alas ! the palmer said,
And for ever wo is me !
Will Stutly hanged must be this day,
On yonder gallows-tree.

O had his noble master known,
He would some succour send ;
A few of his bold yeomandree
Full soon would fetch him hence.

I, that is true, the young man said ;
I, that is true, said he ;
Or, if they were neer to this place,
They soon would set him free.

But fare 'thee' well, thou good old man,
Farewell, and thanks to thee ;
If Stutly hanged be this day,
Reveng'd his death will be.

Hee was no sooner from the palmer gone,
But the gates 'were' open'd wide,
And out of the castle Will Stutly came,
Guarded on every side.

When hee was forth of the castle come,
And saw no help was nigh,
Thus he did say to the sheriff,
Thus he said gallantly :

Now seeing that I needs must die,
Grant me one boon, said he,
For my noble master nere had a man,
That yet was hang'd on the tree.

Give me a sword all in my hand,
And let mee be unbound,
And with thee and thy men Ile fight,
'Till I lie dead on the ground.

But his desire he would not grant,
His wishes were in vain ;
For the sheriff had sworn he hanged should be,
And not by the sword be slain.

Do but unbind my hands he saies,
I will no weapons crave,
And if I hanged be this day,
Damnation let me have.

O no, o no, the sheriff said,
Thou shalt on the gallows die,
I, and so shall thy master too,
If ever in me it lie.

O, dastard coward ! Stutly cries,
Thou faint-heart pesant slave !
If ever my master do thee meet,
Thou shalt thy paiment have.

My noble master 'doth thee' scorn,
 And all thy 'coward' crew;
 Such silly imps unable are
 Bold Robin to subdue.

But when he was to the gallows come,
 And ready to bid adiew,
 Out of a bush leaps little John,
 And comes Will Stutly 'to:'

"I pray thee, Will, before thou die,
 Of thy dear friends take leave;
 I needs must borrow him for a while,
 How say you, master 'shrieve'?"

Now, as I live, the sheriff he said,
 That varlet will I know;
 Some sturdy rebell is that same,
 Therefore let him not go.

Then Little John most hastily,
 Away cut Stutly's bands,
 And from one of the 'sheriffs' men,
 A sword twitcht from his hands.

"Here, Will, here, take thou this same,
 Thou canst it better sway;
 And here defend thyself awhile,
 For aid will come straightway."

And there they turnd them back to back,
 In the middle of them that day,
 'Till Robin Hood approached near,
 With many an archer gay.

With that an arrow by them flew,
I wist from Robin Hood ;
Make haste, make haste, the sheriff he said,
Make haste, for it is good.

The sheriff is gon, his 'doughty' men
Thought 'it no boot to stay,
But as their master had them taught,
'They' run full fast away.

O stay, O stay, Will Stutly said,
Take leave ere you depart ;
You neere will catch bold Robin Hood,
Unless you dare him meet.

O ill betide you, quoth Robin Hood,
That you so soon are gone ;
My sword may in the scabbord rest,
For here our work is done.

I little thought, 'Will Stutly said,'
When I came to this place,
For to have met with Little John,
Or seen my master's face.

Thus Stutly was at liberty set,
And safe brought from his foe :
"O thanks, O thanks to my master,
Since here it was not so.

And once again, my fellows [all],
We shall in the green woods meet,
Where we [will] make our bow-strings twang,
Musick for us most sweet."



XVI.

THE NOBLE FISHER-MAN; OR, ROBIN HOOD'S PREFERMENT:

"SHEWING how he won a prize on the sea, and how he gave the one halfe to his dame, and the other to the building of almes-houses. The tune is, In summer time, &c."

From three old black letter copies; one in the collection of Anthony à Wood, another in the British Museum, and the third in a private collection.



N summer time, when leaves grow green,
When they doe grow both green and
long,—
Of a bold outlaw, call'd Robin Hood,
It is of him I sing this song,—

When the lilly leafe, and the 'eglantine,'
Doth bud and spring with a merry cheere,
This outlaw was weary of the wood side,
And chasing of the fallow deere.

"The fishermen brave more mony have
Than any merchants two or three;
Therefore I will to Scarborough go,
That I a fisherman brave may be."

This outlaw called his merry men all,
 As they sate under the green-wood tree :
 " If any of you have gold to spend,
 I pray you heartily spend it with me."

Now, quoth Robin Hood, Ile to Scarborough go,
 It seems to be a very faire day.
 ' He' took up his inne at a widdow-woman's house,
 Hard by upon the water gray :

Who asked of him, Where wert thou borne ?
 Or tell to me where dost thou fare ?
 I am a poor fisherman, said he then,
 This day intrapped all in care.

" What is thy name, thou fine fellòw,
 I pray thee heartily tell it to mee ?"
 " In my own country, where I was borne,
 Men call me Simon over the Lee."

Simon, Simon, said the good wife,
 I wish thou mayest well brook thy name.
 The out-law was ware of her courtesie,
 And rejoyced he had got such a dame.

" Simon, wilt thou be my man ?
 And good round wages Ile give thee ;
 I have as good a ship of my own,
 As any sails upon the sea ;

Anchors and planks thou shalt not want,
 Masts and ropes that are so long."
 And if you thus do furnish me,
 Said Simon, nothing shall goe wrong.

They pluckt up anchor, and away did sayle,
More of a day then two or three ;
When others cast in their bated hooks,
The bare lines into the sea cast he.

It will be long, said the master then,
Ere this great lubber do thrive on the sea ;
I'le assure you he shall have no part of our fish,
For in truth he is no part worthy.

O woe is me ! said Simon then,
This day that ever I came here !
I wish I were in Plompton parke,
In chasing of the fallow deere.

For every clowne laughs me to scorne,
And they by me set nought at all ;
If I had them in Plompton park,
I would set as little by them all.

They pluckt up anchor, and away did sayle,
More of a day then two or three :
But Simon espyed a ship of warre,
That sayled towards them most valorously.

O woe is me ! said the master then,
This day that ever I was borne !
For all our fish we have got to-day,
Is every bit lost and forlorne.

For your French robbers on the sea,
They will not spare of us one man,
But carry us to the coast of France,
And ligge us in the prison strong.

But Simon said, Doe not feare them,
Neither, master, take you no care ;
Give me my bent bow in my hand,
And never a Frenchman will I spare.

“ Hold thy peace, thou long lubbèr,
For thou art nought but brags and boast ;
If I should cast thee over-board,
There’s but a simple lubber lost.”

Simon grew angry at these words,
And so angry then was he,
That he took his bent bow in his hand,
And in the ship-hatch goe doth he.

Master, tye me to the mast, saith he,
That at my mark I may stand fair,
And give me my bent bow in my hand,
And never a Frenchman will I spare.

He drew his arrow to the very head,
And drew it with all might and maine,
And straightway, in the twinkling of an eye,
‘ To ’ the Frenchman’s heart the ‘ arrow’s gane.’

The Frenchman fell down on the ship hatch,
And under the hatches ‘ there ’ below ;
Another Frenchman, that him espy’d,
The dead corpse into the sea doth throw.

O master, loose me from the mast, he said,
And for them all take you no care ;
For give me my bent bow in my hand,
And never a Frenchman will I spare.

Then streight [they] boarded the French ship,
They lyeing all dead in their sight;
They found within 'that' ship of warre,
Twelve thousand pound of mony bright.

The one halfe of the ship, said Simon then,
He give to my dame and [her] children small;
The other halfe of the ship He bestow
On you that are my fellowes all.

But now bespake the master then,
For so, Simon, it shall not be,
For you have won it with your own hand,
And the owner of it you shall bee.

"It shall be so, as I have said;
And, with this gold, for the opprest
An habitation I will build,
Where they shall live in peace and rest."





XVII.

ROBIN HOOD'S DELIGHT:

"OR, a merry combat fought between Robin Hood, Little John, and Will Scarelock, and three stout Keepers in Sheerwood Forrest.

" Robin was valiant and stout,
So was Scarelock and John in the field,
But these Keepers stout did give them rout,
And make them all for to yield.
But after the battel ended was,
Bold Robin did make them amends,
For claret and sack they did not lack,
So drank themselves good friends.

To the tune of, Robin Hood and Queen Katherine; or,
Robin Hood and the Shepheard."

From an old black letter copy in the collection of Anthony & Wood.



HERE'S some will talk of lords and
knights,

Down, a down, a down,
And some of yeomen good;
But I will tell you of Will Scarlòck,
Little John, and Robin Hood.
Down, a down, a down, a down.

They were outlaws, 'tis well known,
And men of a noble blood;
And many a time was their valour shown
In the forrest of merry Sheerwood.

Upon a time it chanced so,
As Robin would have it be,
They all three would a walking go,
The pastime for to see.

And as they walked the forest along,
Upon a Midsummer day,
There was they aware of three keepers,
Clad all in green array.

With brave long fauchcons by their sides,
And forrest bills in hand,
They call'd aloud to those bold outlaws,
And charged them to stand.

Why, who are you, cry'd bold Robin,
That 'speak' so boldly here?
"We three belong to King Henry,
And are keepers of his deer."

The devil 'you are!' says Robin Hood,
I am sure that it is not so;
We be the keepers of this forrest,
And that you soon shall know.

Come, your coats of green lay on the ground,
And so will we all three,
And take your swords and bucklers round,
And try the victory.

We be content, the keepers said,
We be three, and you no less,
Then why should we be of you afraid,
'As' we never did transgress?

“ Why, if you be three keepers in this forrèst,
Then we be three rangers good,
And will make you know before you do go,
You meet with bold Robin Hood.”

“ We be content, thou bold outlâw,
Our valour here to try,
And will make you know, before we do go,
We will fight before we will fly.

Then, come draw your swords, you bold outlâws,
No longer stand to prate,
But let us try it out with blows,
For cowards we do hate.

Here is one of us for Will Scarlòck,
And another for Little John,
And I myself for Robin Hood,
Because he is stout and strong.”

So they fell to it hard and sore,
It was on a Midsummer's day ;
From eight of the clock 'till two and past,
They all shewed gallant play.

There Robin, and Will, and Little John,
They fought most manfully,
’Till all their winde was spent and gone,
Then Robin aloud did cry :

O hold, O hold, cries bold Robin,
I see you be stout men ;
Let me blow one blast on my bugle horn,
Then Ile fight with you again.

“ That bargain’s to make, bold Robin Hood,
Therefore we it deny;
Thy blast upon the bugle horn
Cannot make us fight or fly.

Therefore fall on, or else be gone,
And yield to us the day:
It never shall be said that we are afraid
Of thee, nor thy yeomen gay.”

If that be so, cries bold Robin,
Let me but know your names,
And in the forrest of merry Sheerwood,
I shall extol your fames.

And with our names, one of them said,
What hast thou here to do?
Except that thou wilt fight it out.
Our names thou shalt not know.

We will fight no more, sayes bold Robin,
You be men of valour stout;
Come and go with me to Nottingham,
And there we will fight it out.

With a but of sack we will bang it ‘about,’
To see who wins the day;
And for the cost make you no doubt,
I have gold ‘enough’ to pay.

And ever hereafter so long as we live,
We all will brethren be;
For I love these men with heart and hand,
That will fight and never flee.

So, away they went to Nottingham,
With sack to make amends;
For three days they the wine did chase,
And drank themselves good friends.





XVIII.

ROBIN HOOD AND THE BEGGAR:

“Shewing how Robin Hood and the Beggar fought, and how he changed cloaths with the Beggar, and how he went a begging to Nottingham; and how he saved three brethren from being hang’d for stealing of deer. To the tune of Robin Hood and the Stranger.”

From an old black letter copy in the collection of Anthony à Wood.



OME and listen, you gentlemen all,
Hey down, down, an a down,
That mirth do love for to hear,
And a story true Ile tell unto you,
If that you will but draw near.

In elder times, when merriment was,
And archery was holden good,
There was an outlâw as many ‘do’ know,
Which men called Robin Hood.

Upon a time it chanced so,
Bold Robin was merry disposed,
His time for to spend he did intend,
Either with friends or foes.

Then he got upon a gallant brave steed,
The which was worth angels ten,
With a mantle of green, most brave to be seen,
He left all his merry men.

And riding towards Nottingham,
Some pastime for to 'spy,
There was he aware of a jolly beggar,
As ere he beheld with his eye.

An old pacht coat the beggar had on,
Which he daily did use to wear ;
And many a bag about him did wag,
Which made Robin to him repair.

God speed, God speed, said Robin Hood,
What countryman ? tell to me.
"I am Yorkshire, sir, but ere you go far,
Some charity give unto me."

Why, what wouldst thou have ? said Robin Hood,
I pray thee tell unto me.
No lands nor livings, the beggar he said,
But a penny for charitie.

I have no money, said Robin Hood then,
But a ranger within the wood ;
I am an outlaw, as many do know,
My name it is Robin Hood.

But yet I must tell thee, bonny beggar,
That a bout with [thee] I must try ;
Thy coat of gray, lay down I say,
And my mantle of green shall lye by.

Content, content, the beggar he cry'd,
Thy part it will be the worse ;
For I hope this bout to give thee the rout,
And then have at thy purse.

So the beggar he had a mickle long staffe,
And Robin a nut-brown sword ;
So the beggar drew nigh, and at Robin let fly,
But gave him never a word.

Fight on, fight on, said Robin Hood then,
This game well pleaseth me.
For every blow that Robin gave,
The beggar gave buffets three.

And fighting there full hard and sore,
Not far from Nottingham town,
They never fled, 'till from Robin Hood's head
The blood came trickling down.

O, hold thy hand, said Robin Hood then,
And thou and I will agree.
If that be true, the beggar he said,
Thy mantle come give unto me.

Now a change, a change, cri'd Robin Hood,
Thy bags and coat give me ;
And this mantle of mine Ile to thee resign,
My horse and my braverie.

When Robin had got the beggar's clothes,
He looked round about ;
Methinks, said he, I seem to be
A beggar brave and stout.

For now I have a bag for my bread,
So I have another for corn ;
I have one for salt, and another for malt,
And one for my little horn.

And now I will a begging goe,
Some charitie for to find.
And if any more of Robin you'll know,
In ' the ' second part 'tis behind.

Now Robin he is to Nottingham bound,
With his bag hanging down to his knee,
His staff, and his coat, scarce worth a groat,
Yet merrilie passed he.

As Robin he passed the streets along,
He heard a pittiful cry ;
Three brethren dear, as he did hear,
Condemned were to dye.

Then Robin he highed to the sheriff's [house],
Some reliefe for to seek ;
He skipt, and leapt, and capered full high,
As he went along the street.

But when to the sheriff's doore he came,
There a gentleman fine and brave,
Thou beggar, said he, come tell unto me
What it is thou wouldest have.

No meat, nor drink, said Robin Hood then,
That I come here to crave ;
But to get the lives of yeomen three,
And that I fain would have.

That cannot be, thou bold beggar,
Their fact it is so cleer;
I tell to thee, they hanged must be,
For stealing of our king's deer.

But when to the gallows they did come,
There was many a weeping eye:
O, hold your peace, said Robin Hood then,
For certain 'they shall' not dye.

Then Robin he set his horn to his mouth,
And he blew out blastes three,
Till a hundred bold archers brave
Came kneeling down to his knee.

What is your will, master? they said,
We are at your command.
Shoot east, shoot west, said Robin Hood then,
And see you spare no man.

Then they shot east, and they shot west,
Their arrows were so keen;
The sheriffe he, and his companie,
No longer 'could' be seen.

Then he stept to those brethren three,
And away he has them tane;
The sheriffe was crost, and many a man lost,
That dead lay on the plain.

And away they went into the merry green wood,
And sung with a merry glee;
And Robin Hood took these brethren good
To be of his yeomandrie.



XIX.

LITTLE JOHN AND THE FOUR BEGGERS.

From an old black letter copy in the collection of Anthony à Wood: the full title being, "A new merry song of Robin Hood and Little John, shewing how Little John went a begging, and how he fought with the four beggers, and what a prize he got of the four beggers. The tune is 'Robin Hood and the Begger.'"



LL you that delight to spend some time,
 With a hey down, down, a down, down,
A merry song for to sing,
 Unto me draw neer, and you shall hear
How Little John went a begging.

As Robin Hood walked the forest along,
 And all his yeomandree,
Sayes Robin, Some of you must a begging go,
 And, Little John, it must be thee.

Sayes John, If I must a begging go,
 I will have a palmer's weed,
With a staff and a coat, and bags of all sort,
 The better then I may speed.

Come, give me now a bag for my bread,
And another for my cheese,
And one for a penny, when as I get any,
That nothing I may leese.

Now Little John he is a begging gone,
Seeking for some relief;
But of all the beggers he met on the way,
Little John he was the chief.

But as he was walking himself alone,
Four beggers he chanced to spy,
Some deaf, and some blind, and some came behind;
Sayes John, Here's a brave company.

Good-morrow, said John, my brethren dear,
Good fortune I had you to see;
Which way do you go? pray let me know,
For I want some company.

O! what is here to do? then said Little John:
Why ring all these bells? said he;
What dog is a hanging? Come, let us be ganging,
That we the truth may see.

Here is no dog a hanging, then one of them said,
Good fellow, we tell unto thee;
But here is one dead, that will give us cheese and
And it may be one single penny. [bread,

We have brethren in London, another he said,
So have we in Coventry,
In Barwick and Dover, and all the world over,
But ne'er a crookt carril like thee.

Therefore stand thee back, thou crooked carèl,
And take that knock on the crown.
Nay, said Little John, Ile not yet be gone,
For a bout will I have of you round.

Now have at you all, then said Little John,
If you be so full of your blows ;
Fight on all four, and nere give ore,
Whether you be friends or foes.

John nipped the dumb, and made him to rore,
And the blind 'he made to' see ;
And he that a cripple had been seven years,
He made run then faster than he.

And flinging them all against the wall,
With many a sturdie bang,
It made John sing, to hear the gold ring,
Which again the walls cryed twang.

Then he got out of the begger's cloak
Three hundred pound in gold ;
Good fortune had I, then said Little John,
Such a good sight to behold.

But what found he in the beggar's bag
But three hundred pound and three ?
" If I drink water while this doth last,
Then an ill death may I dye.

And my begging trade I will now give ore,
My fortune hath bin so good ;
Therefore Ile not stay, but I will away,
To the forrest of merry Sherwood."

And when to the forrest of Sherwood he came,
He quickly there did see
His master good, bold Robin Hood,
And all his company.

What news? What news? then said Robin Hood,
Come, Little John, tell unto me;
How hast thou sped with thy begger's trade?
For that I fain would see.

No news but good, said Little John,
With begging ful wel I have sped;
Six hundred and three I have here for thee,
In silver and gold so red.

'Then' Robin Hood took Little John by the hand,
And danced about the oak tree:
"If we drink water while this doth last,
Then an il death may we die."

So to conclude my merry new song,
All you that delight it to sing;
'Tis of Robin Hood, that archer good,
And how Little John went a begging.





XX.

ROBIN HOOD AND THE RANGER;
OR, TRUE FRIENDSHIP AFTER
A FIERCE FIGHT.

No ancient copy of this ballad having been met with, it is given from an edition of "Robin Hood's Garland," printed some years since at York. The tune is "Arthur a Bland."



WHEN Phœbus had melted the 'sickles'
 With a hey down, &c. [of ice,
And likewise the mountains of snow,
 Bold Robin Hood he would ramble
To frolick abroad with his bow. [away,

He left all his merry men waiting behind,
 Whilst through the green vallies he pass'd,
Where he did behold a forester bold,
 Who cry'd out, Friend, whither so fast?

I am going, quoth Robin, to kill a fat buck,
 For me and my merry men all;
Besides, ere I go, I'll have a fat doe,
 Or else it shall cost me a fall.

You'd best have a care, said the forester then,
For these are his majesty's deer ;
Before you shall shoot, the thing I'll dispute,
For I am head forester here.

These thirteen long summers, quoth Robin, I'm
My arrows I here have let fly, [sure,
Where freely I range ; methinks it is strange
You should have more power than I.

This forest, quoth Robin, I think is my own,
And so are the nimble deer too ;
Therefore I declare, and solemnly swear,
I'll not be affronted by you.

The forester he had a long quarter-staff,
Likewise a broad sword by his side ;
Without more ado, he presently drew,
Declaring the truth should be try'd.

Bold Robin Hood had a sword of the best,
Thus, ere he would take any wrong,
His courage was flush, he'd venture a brush,
And thus they fell to it ding dong.

The very first blow that the forester gave,
He made his broad weapon cry twang ;
'Twas over the head, he fell down for dead,
O that was a damnable bang !

But Robin he soon recovered himself,
And bravely fell to it again ;
The very next stroke their weapons they broke,
Yet never a man there was slain.

At quarter-staff then they resolved to play,
Because they would have the other bout ;
And brave Robin Hood right valiantly stood,
Unwilling he was to give out.

Bold Robin he gave him very hard blows,
The other return'd them as fast ;
At every stroke their jackets did smoke ;
Three hours the combat did last.

At length in a rage the forester grew,
And cudgel'd bold Robin so sore,
That he could not stand, so shaking his hand,
He cry'd, Let us freely give o'er.

Thou art a brave fellow, I needs must confess
I never knew any so good ;
Thou art fitting to be a yeoman for me,
And range in the merry green wood.

I'll give thee this ring as a token of love,
For bravely thou hast acted thy part ;
That man that can fight, in him I delight,
And love him with all my whole heart.

Robin Hood set his bugle horn to his mouth,
A blast then he merrily blows ;
His yeomen did hear, and strait did appear,
A hundred with trusty long bows.

Now Little John came at the head of them all,
Cloath'd in a rich mantle of green ;
And likewise the rest were gloriously drest,
A delicate sight to be seen !

Lo ! these are my yeomen, said bold Robin Hood,
And thou shalt be one of the train ;
A mantle and bow, and quiver also,
I give them whom I entertain.

The forester willingly enter'd the list,
They were such a beautiful sight ;
Then with a long bow they shot a fat doe,
And made a rich supper that night.

What singing and dancing was in the green wood,
For joy of another new mate !
With might and delight they spent all the night,
And liv'd at a plentiful rate.

The forester ne'er was so merry before,
As then he was with these brave souls,
Who never would fail, in wine, beer, or ale,
To take off their cherishing bowls.

Then Robin Hood gave him a mantle of green,
Broad arrows, and curious long bow :
This done, the next day, so gallant and gay,
He marched them all on a row.

Quoth he, My brave yeomen, be true to your trust,
And then we may range the woods wide.
They all did declare, and solemnly swear,
They would conquer, or die by his side.



XXI.

ROBIN HOOD AND LITTLE JOHN :

“ Being an account of their first meeting, their fierce encounter, and conquest. To which is added, their friendly agreement; and how he came to be called Little John. Tune of Arthur a Bland.”

This ballad is named in a schedule of such things under an agreement between W. Thackeray and others in 1689, (Col. Pepys. vol. 5.) but is here given as corrected from a copy in the “ Collection of Old Ballads,” 1723.



MHEN Robin Hood was about twenty years
old,
With a hey down, down, and a down ;
He happen'd to meet Little John,
A jolly brisk blade, right fit for the trade,
For he was a lusty young man.

Tho' he was call'd Little, his limbs they were large,
And his stature was seven foot high ;
Whereever he came, they quak'd at his name,
For soon he would make them to fly.

How they came acquainted, I'll tell you in brief,
If you would but listen awhile ;
For this very jest, among all the rest,
I think it may cause you to smile.

For Robin Hood said to his jolly bowmèn,
Pray tarry you here in this grove ;
And see that you all observe well my call,
While thorough the forest I rove.

We have had no sport for these fourteen long days,
Therefore now abroad will I go ;
Now should I be beat, and cannot retreat,
My horn I will presently blow.

Then did he shake hands with his merry men all,
And bid them at present good b' w'ye :
Then, as near the brook his journey he took,
A stranger he chanc'd to espy.

They happen'd to meet on a long narrow bridge,
And neither of them would give way ;
Quoth bold Robin Hood, and sturdily stood,
I'll shew you right Nottingham-play.

With that from his quiver an arrow he drew,
A broad arrow with a goose-wing.
The stranger reply'd, I'll liquor thy hide,
If thou offer to touch the string.

Quoth bold Robin Hood, Thou dost prate like an ass,
For were I to bend but my bow,
I could send a dart, quite thro' thy proud heart,
Before thou could'st strike me one blow.

Thou talk'st like a coward, the stranger reply'd ;
Well arm'd with a long bow you stand,
To shoot at my breast, while I, I protest,
Have nought but a staff in my hand.

The name of a coward, quoth Robin, I scorn,
Therefore my long bow I'll lay by ;
And now, for thy sake, a staff will I take,
The truth of thy manhood to try.

Then Robin Hood stept to a thicket of trees,
And chose him a staff of ground oak ;
Now this being done, away he did run
To the stranger, and merrily spoke :

Lo ! see my staff is lusty and tough,
Now here on the bridge we will play ;
Whoever falls in, the other shall win
The battle, and so we'll away.

With all my whole heart, the stranger reply'd,
I scorn in the least to give out ;
This said, they fell to't without more dispute,
And their staffs they did flourish about.

At first Robin he gave the stranger a bang,
So hard that he made his bones ring :
The stranger he said, This must be repaid,
I'll give you as good as you bring.

So long as I am able to handle a staff,
To die in your debt, friend, I scorn.
Then to it each goes, and follow'd their blows,
As if they'd been threshing of corn.

The stranger gave Robin a crack on the crown,
Which caused the blood to appear ;
Then Robin enrag'd, more fiercely engag'd,
And follow'd his blows more severe.

So thick and so fast did he lay it on him,
With a passionate fury and ire ;
At every stroke he made him to smoke,
As if he had been all on fire.

O then into fury the stranger he grew,
And gave him a damnable look,
And with it a blow, that laid him full low,
And tumbl'd him into the brook.

I prithee, good fellow, o where art thou now ?
The stranger, in laughter, he cry'd.
Quoth bold Robin Hood, Good faith, in the flood,
And floating along with the tide.

I needs must acknowledge thou art a brave soul,
With thee I'll no longer contend ;
For needs must I say, thou hast got the day,
Our battel shall be at an end.

Then unto the bank he did presently wade,
And pull'd himself out by a thorn ;
Which done, at the last he blow'd a loud blast
Straitway on his fine bugle-horn :

The eccho of which through the vallies did fly,
At which his stout bowmen appear'd,
All cloathed in green, most gay to be seen,
So up to their master they steer'd.

O, what's the matter ? quoth William Stutely,
Good master you are wet to the skin.
No matter, quoth he, the lad which you see
In fighting hath tumbl'd me in,

He shall not go scot-free, the others reply'd ;
So strait they were seizing him there,
To duck him likewise : but Robin Hood cries,
He is a stout fellow ; forbear.

There's no one shall wrong thee, friend, be not afraid ;
These bowmen upon me do wait ;
There's threescore and nine ; if thou wilt be mine,
Thou shalt have my livery strait,

And other accoutrements fit for a man ;
Speak up jolly blade, never fear :
I'll teach you also the use of the bow,
To shoot at the fat fallow deer.

O, here is my hand, the stranger reply'd
I'll serve you with all my whole heart ;
My name is John Little, a man of good mettle ;
Ne're doubt me, for I'll play my part.

His name shall be alter'd, quoth William Stutely,
And I will his godfather be ;
Prepare then a feast, and none of the least,
For we will be merry, quoth he.

They presently fetch'd him a brace of fat does,
With humming strong liquor likewise ;
They lov'd what was good ; so, in the green wood,
This pretty sweet babe they baptize.

He was, I must tell you, but seven foot high,
And, may be, an ell in the waste ;
A sweet pretty lad : much feasting they had ;
Bold Robin the christ'ning grac'd,

With all his bowmen, which stood in a ring,
And were of the Nottingham breed ;
Brave Stutely came then, with seven yeomèn,
And did in this manner proceed :

This infant was called John Little, quoth he ;
Which name shall be changed anon :
The words we'll transpose ; so whereever he goes,
His name shall be call'd Little John.

They all with a shout made the elements ring ;
So soon as the office was ore,
To feasting they went, with true merriment,
And tippl'd strong liquor gillore.

Then Robin he took the pretty sweet babe,
And cloath'd him from top to the toe,
In garments of green, most gay to be seen,
And gave him a curious long bow.

“ Thou shalt be an archer as well as the best,
And range in the green wood with us ;
Where we'll not want gold nor silver, behold,
While bishops have ought in their purse.

We live here like 'squires, or lords of renown,
Without ere a foot of free land ;
We feast on good cheer, with wine, ale and beer,
And ev'ry thing at our command.”

Then musick and dancing did finish the day ;
At length, when the sun waxed low,
Then all the whole train the grove did refrain,
And unto their caves they did go.

And so, ever after, as long as he liv'd,
Altho' he was proper and tall,
Yet, nevertheless, the truth to express,
Still Little John they did him call.





XXII.

ROBIN HOOD AND THE BISHOP OF HEREFORD.

This excellent ballad, given from the common edition of Aldermary-church-yard, (compared with the York copy,) is supposed to be modern : the story, however, seems alluded to in the ballad of " Renowned Robin Hood." The full title is " The bishop of Hereford's entertainment by Robin Hood and Little John, &c. in merry Barnsdale." The tune is added from an engraved sheet.



OME they will talk of bold Robin Hood,
And some of barons bold ;
But I'll tell you how he serv'd the bishop
of Hereford,
When he robb'd him of his gold.

As it befel in merry Barnsdale,
' All' under the green-wood-tree,
The bishop of Hereford was to come by,
With all his company.

Come, kill [me] a ven'son, said bold Robin Hood,
Come, kill me a good fat deer,
The bishop of Hereford is to dine with me to-day,
And he shall pay well for his cheer.

“We’ll kill a fat ven’son, said bold Robin Hood,
And dress it by the highway side ;
And we will watch the bishop narrowly,
Lest some other way he should ride.

Robin Hood dress’d himself in shepherd’s attire,
With six of his men alsò ;
And, when the bishop of Hereford came by,
They about the fire did go.

O what is the matter ? then said the bishòp,
Or for whom do you make this a-do ?
Or why do you kill the king’s ven’son,
When your company is so few ?

We are shephèrds, said bold Robin Hood,
And we keep sheep all the year,
And we are disposed to be merry this day,
And to kill of the king’s fat deer.

You are brave fellows ! said the bishòp,
And the king of your doings shall know :
Therefore make haste, and come along with me,
For before the king you shall go.

O pardon, O pardon, said bold Robin Hood,
O pardon, I thee pray ;
For it becomes not your lordship’s coat
To take so many lives away.

No pardon, no pardon, said the bishòp,
No pardon I thee owe ;
Therefore make haste, and come along with me,
For before the king you shall go.

Then Robin set his back against a tree,
And his foot against a thorn,
And from underneath his shepherd's coat
He pull'd out a bugle-horn.

He put the little end to his mouth,
And a loud blast did he blow,
'Till threescore and ten of bold Robin's men
Came running all on a row :

All making obeysance to bold Robin Hood ;
'Twas a comely sight for to see.
What is the matter, master, said Little John,
That you blow so hastily ?

“ O here is the bishop of Hereford,
And no pardon we shall have.”
Cut off his head, master, said Little John,
And throw him into his grave.

O pardon, O pardon, said the bishòp,
O pardon I thee pray ;
For if I had known it had been you,
I'd have gone some other way.

No pardon, no pardon, said bold Robin Hood,
No pardon I thee owe ;
Therefore make haste, and come along with me,
For to merry Barnsdale you shall go.

Then Robin he took the bishop by the hand,
And led him to merry Barnsdale ;
He made him to stay and sup with him that night,
And to drink wine, beer, and ale.

Call in a reckoning, said the bishòp,
 For methinks it grows wond'rous high.
 Lend me your purse, master, said Little John,
 And I'll tell you bye and bye.

Then Little John took the bishop's cloak,
 And spread it upon the ground,
 And out of the bishop's portmantua
 He told three hundred pound.

Here's money enough, master, said Little John,
 And a comely sight 'tis to see;
 It makes me in charity with the bishòp,
 Tho' he heartily loveth not me.

Robin Hood took the bishop by the hand,
 And he caused the music to play;
 And he made the [old] bishop to dance in his boots,
 And glad he could so get away.





XXIII.

ROBIN HOOD RESCUING THE WIDOW'S THREE SONS FROM THE SHERIFF, WHEN GOING TO BE EXECUTED.

THIS ballad, from the York edition of "Robin Hood's garland," is probably one of the oldest extant of which he is the subject. In the more common editions is a modernised copy, in which the "silly old woman" is converted into "a gay lady;" but even this is more ancient than many of the pieces here inserted.



HERE are twelve months in all the year,
As I hear many say,
But the merriest month in all the year
Is the merry month of May.

Now Robin Hood is to Nottingham gone,
With a link a down, and a day,
And there he met a silly old woman,
Was weeping on the way.

"What news? what news? thou silly old woman,
What news hast thou for me?"
Said she, There's three squires in Nottingham town,
To-day 'are' condemned to die.

Oh, have they parishes burnt? he said,
Or have they ministers slain,
Or have they robbed any virgin,
Or with other men's wives have lain?

"They have no parishes burnt, good sir,
Nor yet have ministers slain,
Nor have they robbed any virgin,
Nor with other men's wives have lain."

Oh, what have they done? said Robin Hood,
I pray thee tell to me.
"It's for slaying of the king's fallow deer,
Bearing their long bows with thee."

Dost thou not mind, old woman, he said,
Since thou made me sup and dine?
By the truth of my body, quoth bold Robin Hood,
You could not tell it in better time.

Now Robin Hood is to Nottingham gone,
With a link, a down, and a 'day,'
And there he met with a silly old palmer,
Was walking along the highway.

"What news? what news? thou silly old man,
What news, I do thee pray?"
Said he, Three squires in Nottingham town,
Are condemn'd to die this day.

"Come change thy apparel with me, old man,
Come change thy apparel for mine;
Here is forty shillings in good silver,
Go drink it in beer or wine."

Oh, thine apparel is good, he said,
And mine is ragged and torn ;
Whereever you go, wherever you ride,
Laugh ne'er an old man to scorn.

“ Come change thy apparel with me, old churl,
Come change thy apparel with mine ;
Here are twenty pieces of good broad gold,
Go feast thy brethren with wine.”

Then he put on the old man's hat,
It stood full high on the crown :
“ The first bold bargain that I come at,
It shall make thee come down.”

Then he put on the old man's cloak,
Was patch'd black, blew, and red ;
He thought it no shame, all the day long,
To wear the bags of bread.

Then he put on the old man's brecks,
Was patch'd from ballup to side :
By the truth of my body, bold Robin can say,
This man lov'd little pride.

Then he put on the old man's hose,
Were patch'd from knee to wrist :
By the truth of my body, said bold Robin Hood,
I'd laugh if I had any list.

Then he put on the old man's shoes,
Were patch'd both beneath and aboon ;
Then Robin Hood swore a solemn oath,
It's good habit that makes a man.

Now Robin Hood is to Nottingham gone,
With a link a down and a down,
And there he met with the proud sheriff,
Was walking along the town.

Oh 'Christ you' save, oh, sheriff, he said,
Oh 'Christ you save and see ;'
And what will you give to a silly old man
To-day will your hangman be ?

Some suits, some suits, the sheriff he said,
Some suits I'll give to thee ;
Some suits, some suits, and pence thirteen,
To-day's a hangman's fee.

Then Robin he turns him round about,
And jumps from stock to stone :
By the truth of my body, the sheriff he said,
That's well jump't, thou nimble old man.

I was ne'er a hangman in all my life,
Nor yet intends to trade ;
But curst be he, said bold Robin,
That first a hangman was made.

I've a bag for meal, and a bag for malt,
And a bag for barley and corn ;
A bag for bread, and a bag for beef,
And a bag for my little small horn.

I have a horn in my pockèt,
I got it from Robin Hood,
And still when I set it to my mouth,
For 'thee' it blows little good.

“Oh, wind thy horn, thou proud fellow,
Of thee I have no doubt;
I wish that thou give such a blast,
Till both thy eyes fall out.”

The first loud blast that he did blow,
He blew both loud and shrill;
A hundred and fifty of Robin Hood's men
Came riding over the hill.

The next loud blast that he did give,
He blew both loud and amain,
And quickly sixty of Robin Hood's men,
Came shining over the plain.

Oh, who are ‘those,’ the sheriff he said,
Come tripping over the lee?
They're my attendants, brave Robin did say,
They'll pay a visit to thee.

They took the gallows from the slack,
They set it in the glen,
They hang'd the proud sheriff on that,
Releas'd their own three men.





XXIV.

ROBIN HOOD AND MAID MARIAN.

THIS ballad, which has never been inserted in any of the publications intitled "Robin Hood's garland," (and, perhaps, was not worth inserting here,) is given from an old black letter copy in the collection of Anthony à Wood. Its full title is, "A famous battle between Robin Hood and maid Marian; declaring their love, life, and liberty. Tune, Robin Hood reviv'd."



BONNY fine maid of a noble degree,
With a hey down, down, a down, down,
Maid Marian call'd by name,
Did live in the North, of excellent worth,
For shee was a gallant dame.

For favour and face, and beauty most rare,
Queen Hellen shee did excell :
For Marian then was prais'd of all men,
That did in the country dwell.

'Twas neither Rosamond nor Jane Shore,
Whose beauty was clear and bright,
That could surpass this country lass,
Beloved of lord and knight.

The earl of Huntington, nobly born,
That came of noble blood,
To Marian went, with a good intent,
By the name of Robin Hood.

With kisses sweet their red lips did meet,
For she and the earl did agree ;
In every place, they kindly embrace,
With love and sweet unity.

But fortune bearing these lovers a spight,
That soon they were forced to part :
To the merry green wood then went Robin Hood,
With a sad and sorrowfull heart.

And Marian, poor soul, was troubled in mind,
For the absence of her friend ;
With finger in eye, shee often did cry,
And his person did much comend.

Perplexed and vexed, and troubled in mind,
Shee drest herself like a page,
And ranged the wood, to find Robin Hood,
The bravest of men in that age.

With quiver and bow, sword, buckler, and all,
Thus armed was Marian most bold,
Still wandering about, to find Robin out,
Whose person was better then gold.

But Robin Hood, hee, himself had disguis'd,
And Marian was strangely attir'd,
That they prov'd foes, and so fell to blowes,
Whose valleur bold Robin admir'd.

They drew out their swords, and to cutting they went,
At least an hour or more,
That the blood ran apace from bold Robin's face,
And Marian was wounded sore.

O hold thy hand, hold thy hand, said Robin Hood,
And thou shalt be one of my string,
To range in the wood, with bold Robin Hood,
To hear the sweet nightingall sing.

When Marian did hear the voice of her love,
Her self shee did quickly discover,
And with kisses sweet she did him greet,
Like to a most loyall lover.

When bold Robin Hood his Marian did see,
Good lord, what clipping was there !
With kind embraces, and jobbing of faces,
Providing of gallant cheer.

For Little John took his bow in his hand,
And ' wandred ' in the wood,
To kill the deer, and make good chear,
For Marian and Robin Hood.

A stately banquet ' they ' had full soon,
All in a shaded bower,
Where venison sweet they had to eat,
And were merry that present hour.

Great flaggons of wine were set on the board,
And merrily they drunk round
Their boules of sack, to strengthen the back,
Whilst their knees did touch the ground.

First Robin Hood began a health
To Marian his onely dear ;
And his yeomen all, both comly and tall,
Did quickly bring up the rear :

For in a brave venie they tost off the bouls,
Whilst thus they did remain ;
And every cup, as they drunk up,
They filled with speed again.

At last they ended their merrymment,
And went to walk in the wood,
Where Little John, and maid Marian,
Attended on bold Robin Hood.

In sollid content together they liv'd,
With all their yeomen gay ;
They liv'd by ' their' hands, without any lands,
And so they did many a day.

But now to conclude an end I will make,
In time as I think it good ;
For the people that dwell in the North can tell
Of Marian and bold Robin Hood.





XXV.

THE KING'S DISGUISE, AND FRIENDSHIP WITH ROBIN HOOD,

From the common collection of Aldermary church-yard, seems to be taken from the old legend in the seventh Fytte of the "Lytell Geste," and to have been written by some miserable retainer to the press, merely to eke out the book; being, in fact, a most contemptible performance.

The two concluding lines (the same with those of the next ballad) refer to song XXVII. which they have once immediately preceded.



ING Richard hearing of the pranks
Of Robin Hood and his men,
He much admir'd, and more desired
To see both him and them.

Then with a dozen of his lords,
To Nottingham he rode;
When he came there, he made good cheer,
And took up his abode.

He having staid there some time,
But had no hopes to speed,
He and his lords, with one accord,
All put on monk's weeds.

From Fountain-abbey they did ride,
Down to Barnsdale ;
Where Robin Hood prepared stood
All company to assail.

The king was higher than the rest,
And Robin thought he had
An abbot been whom he had seen,
To rob him he was glad.

He took the king's horse by the head,
Abbot, says he, abide ;
I am bound to rue such knaves as you,
That live in pomp and pride.

But we are messengers from the king,
The king himself did say ;
Near to this place his royal grace
To speak with thee does stay.

God save the king, said Robin Hood,
And all that wish him well ;
He that does deny his sovereignty,
I wish he was in hell.

Thyself thou cursedst, says the king,
For thou a traitor art.
" Nay, but that you are his messenger,
I swear you lie in heart.

For I never yet hurt any man
That honest is and true ;
But those who give their minds to live
Upon other men's due.

I never hurt the 'husbandmen,'
That use to till the ground :
Nor spill their blood who range the wood,
To follow hawk or hound.

My chiefest spite to clergy is,
Who in these days bear great sway ;
With fryars and monks, with their fine sprunks,
I make my chiefest prey."

But I am very glad, says Robin Hood,
That I have met you here ;
Come, before we end, you shall, my friend,
Taste of our green-wood cheer.

The king he then did marvel much,
And so did all his men ;
They thought with fear, what kind of cheer,
Robin would provide for them.

Robin took the king's horse by the head,
And led him to his tent :
Thou wouldst not be so us'd, quoth he,
But that my king thee sent.

Nay, more than that, quoth Robin Hood,
For good king Richard's sake,
If you had as much gold as ever I told,
I would not one penny take.

Then Robin set his horn to his mouth,
And a loud blast he did blow,
'Till a hundred and ten of Robin Hood's men,
Came marching all of a row.

And when they came bold Robin before,
Each man did bend his knee:
O, thought the king, 'tis a gallant thing,
And a seemly sight to see.

Within himself the king did say,
These men of Robin Hood's
More humble be than mine to me;
So the court may learn of the woods.

So then they all to dinner went,
Upon a carpet green;
Black, yellow, red, finely mingled,
Most curious to be seen.

Venison and fowls were plenty there,
With fish out of the river:
King Richard swore, on sea or shore,
He never was feasted better.

Then Robin takes a cann of ale:
"Come, let us now begin;
And every man shall have his cann:
Here's a health unto the king."

The king himself drank to the king,
So round about it went;
Two barrels of ale, both stout and stale,
To pledge that health was spent.

And, after that, a bowl of wine
In his hand took Robin Hood;
Until I die, I'll drink wine, said he,
While I live in the green wood.

Bend all your bows, said Robin Hood,
 And with the grey-goose-wing,
 Such sport now show, as you would do
 In the presence of the king.

They shewed such brave archery,
 By cleaving sticks and wands,
 That the king did say, such men as they
 Live not in many lands.

Well, Robin Hood, then says the king,
 If I could thy pardon get,
 To serve the king in every thing
 Would'st thou thy mind firm set?

Yes, 'with all' my heart, bold Robin said,
 So they flung off their hoods,
 To serve the king in every thing,
 They swore they would spend their 'bloods.'

For a clergyman was first my bane,
 Which makes me hate them all,
 But if you will be so kind to me,
 Love them again I shall.

The king no longer could forbear,
 For he was moved with 'ruth.'

* * * * *

"I am the king, 'your' sovereign king,
 That appears before you all."
 When Robin saw that it was he,
 Strait then he down did fall.

Stand up again, then said the king,
I'll thee thy pardon give ;
Stand up my friend, who can contend,
When I give leave to live ?

So they are all gone to Nottingham,
All shouting as they came :
But when the people them did see,
They thought the king was slain ;

And for that cause the outlaws were come,
To rule all as they list ;
And for to shun, which ' way ' to run,
The people did not wist.

The plowman left the plow in the fields,
The smith ran from his shop ;
Old folks also, that scarce could go,
Over their sticks did hop.

The king soon did let them understand
He had been in the green-wood,
And from that day, for evermore,
He'd forgiven Robin Hood.

Then [when] the people they did hear,
And [that] the truth was known,
They all did sing, God save the king !
Hang care, the town's our own !

What's that Robin Hood ? then said the sheriff,
That varlet I do hate ;
Both me and mine he caused to dine,
And serv'd us all with one plate.

Ho, ho, said Robin Hood, I know what you mean,
Come, take your gold again ;
Be friends with me, and I with thee,
And so with every man.

Now, master sheriff, you are paid,
And since you are beginner,
As well as you give me my due,
For you ne'er paid for that dinner.

But if ' that it ' should please the king,
So much your house to grace,
To sup with you, for, to speak true,
[I] know you ne'er was base.

The sheriff [this] could not gainsay,
For a trick was put upon him ;
A supper was drest, the king was a guest,
But he thought 'twould have outdone him.

They are all gone to London court,
Robin Hood, with all his train ;
He once was there a noble peer,
And now he's there again.

Many such pranks brave Robin play'd,
While he liv'd in the green wood :
Now, my friend, attend, and hear an end
Of honest Robin Hood.



XXVI.

ROBIN HOOD AND THE GOLDEN ARROW.

A COMPOSITION of a similar nature with the preceding ; and from the same authority.



WHEN as the sheriff of Nottingham
Was come with mickle grief,
He talk'd no good of Robin Hood,
That strong and sturdy thief.
Fal la dal de.

So unto London road he past,
His losses to unfold
To king Richard, who did regard
The tale that he had told.

Why, quoth the king, what shall I do ?
Art thou not sheriff for me ?
The law is in force, to take thy course
Of them that injure thee.

Go get thee gone, and by thyself
Devise some tricking game,
For to enthrall yon rebels all,
Go take thy course with them.

So away the sheriff he return'd,
And by the way he thought
Of th' words of the king, and how the thing
To pass might well be brought.

For within his mind he imaginèd,
That when such matches were,
Those outlaws stout, without all doubt,
Would be the bowmen there.

So an arrow with a golden head,
And shaft of silver-white,
Who on the day should bear away
For his own proper right.

Tidings came to bold Robin Hood,
Under the green-wood tree :
“ Come prepare you then, my merry men,
We'll go yon sport to see.”

With that stept forth a brave young man,
David of Doncastèr,
Master, said he, be rul'd by me,
From the green wood we'll not stir.

To tell the truth, I'm well inform'd,
Yon match it is a wile ;
The sheriff, I wiss, devises this
Us archers to beguile.

Thou smells of a coward, said Robin Hood,
Thy words do not please me ;
Come on't what will, I'll try my skill,
At yon brave archery.

O then bespoke brave Little John,
Come let us thither gang;
Come listen to me, how it shall be,
That we need not be ken'd.

Our mantles all of Lincoln-green
Behind us we will leave;
We'll dress us all so several,
They shall not us perceive.

One shall wear white, another red,
One yellow, another blue;
Thus in disguise, 'to' the exercise
We'll gang, whate'er insue.

Forth from the green wood they are gone,
With hearts all firm and stout,
Resolving [then] with the sheriff's men
To have a hearty bout.

So themselves they mixed with the rest,
To prevent all suspicion;
For if they should together hold
They thought it no discretion.

So the sheriff 'looked' round about,
Amongst eight hundred men,
But could not see the sight that he
Had long suspected then.

Some said, if Robin Hood was here,
And all his men to boot,
Sure none of them could pass these men,
So bravely they do shoot.

Ay, quoth the sheriff, and scratch'd his head,
I thought he would have been here ;
I thought he would, but tho' he's bold,
He durst not now appear.

O that word griev'd Robin Hood to the heart,
He vexed in his blood ;
Ere long, thought he, thou shalt well see
That here was Robin Hood.

Some cried, Blue jacket ! another cried, Brown !
And a third cried, Brave yellow !
But the fourth man said, Yon man in red
In this place has no fellow.

For that was Robin Hood himself,
For he was cleath'd in red ;
At every shot the prize he got,
For he was both sure and dead.

So the arrow with the golden head,
And shaft of silver-white,
Brave Robin Hood won, and bore with him,
For his own proper right.

These outlaws there, that very day,
To shun all kinds of doubt,
By three or four, no less nor more,
As they went in came out.

Until they all assembled were
Under the green-wood shade,
Where they 'report,' in pleasant sport,
What brave pastime they made.

Says Robin Hood, all my care is,
How that yon sheriff may
Know certainly that it was I
That bore his arrow away.

Says Little John, My counsel good
Did take effect before,
So therefore now, if you'll allow,
I will advise once more.

Speak on, speak on, said Robin Hood,
Thy wit's both quick and sound,
* * * * *
* * * * *

This I advise, said Little John,
That a letter shall be penn'd,
And when it is done, to Nottingham
You to the sheriff shall send.

That is well advised, said Robin Hood,
But how must it be sent ?
“ Pugh ! when you please, 'tis done with ease ;
Master, be you content.

I'll stick it on my arrow's head,
And shoot it into the town ;
The mark must show where it must go,
Whenever it lights down.”

The project it was well perform'd,
The sheriff that letter had,
Which when he read, he scratch'd his head,
And rav'd like one that's mad.

So we'll leave him chafing in 'his' grease,
Which will do him no good :
Now, my friends, attend, and hear the end
Of honest Robin Hood.





XXVII.

ROBIN HOOD AND THE VALIANT KNIGHT.

“TOGETHER with an account of his death and burial, &c. Tune of Robin Hood and the fifteen foresters.” From the common garland of Aldermay church-yard: corrected by the York copy.



W^HEN Robin Hood, and his merry men all,
 Derry down, down,
Had reigned many years,
The king was then told that they had been
 bold
To his bishops and noble peers.
 Hey down, derry, derry down.

Therefore they called a council of state,
To know what was best to be done,
For to quell their pride, or else they reply'd
The land would be over-run.

Having consulted a whole summer's day,
At length it was agreed,
That one should be sent to try the event,
And fetch him away with speed.

T

Therefore a trusty and most worthy knight
The king was pleas'd to call,
Sir William by name; when to him he came,
He told him his pleasure all.

“ Go you from hence to bold Robin Hood,
And bid him, without more ado,
Surrender himself, or else the proud elf
Shall suffer with all his crew.

Take here a hundred bowmen brave,
All chosen men of great might,
Of excellent art to take thy part,
In glittering armour most bright.”

Then said the knight, My sovereign liege,
By me they shall be led;
I'll venture my blood against bold Robin Hood
And bring him alive or dead.

One hundred men were chosen straight,
As proper as e'er men saw:
On Midsummer-day they marched away,
To conquer that brave outlaw.

With long yew bows, and shining spears,
They march'd with mickle pride,
And never delay'd, nor halted, nor stay'd
Till they came to the green-wood side.

Said he to his archers, Tarry here,
Your bows make ready all,
That if need should be, you may follow me,
And see you observe my call.

I'll go first in person, he cry'd,
With the letters of my good king,
Well sign'd and seal'd, and if he will yield,
We need not to draw one string.

He wander'd about till at length he came
To the tent of Robin Hood :
The letter he shows ; bold Robin arose,
And there on his guard he stood.

They'd have me surrender, quoth bold Robin Hood,
And lie at their mercy then ;
But tell them from me, that never shall be,
While I have full seven score men.

Sir William the knight, both hardy and bold,
He offer'd to seize him there,
Which William Locksley by fortune did see,
And bid him that trick to forbear.

Then Robin Hood set his horn to his mouth,
And blew a blast or twain,
And so did the knight, at which there in sight
The archers came all amain.

Sir William with care drew up his men,
And plac'd them in battle array :
Bold Robin, we find, he was not behind :
Now this was a bloody fray.

The archers on both sides bent their bows,
And the clouds of arrows flew ;
The very first flight that honour'd knight
Did there bid the world adieu.

Yet nevertheless their fight did last
From morning till almost noon ;
Both parties were stout and loth to give out,
This was on the last day of June.

At length they left off: one party they went
To London with right good will ;
And Robin Hood he to the green-wood tree,
And there he was taken ill.

He sent for a monk, to let him blood,
Who took his life away :
Now this being done, his archers they run,
It was not a time to stay.

Some got on board, and cross'd the seas,
To Flanders, France, and Spain,
And others to Rome, for fear of their doom,
But soon return'd again.





XXVIII.

ROBIN HOOD'S DEATH AND BURIAL:

"Shewing how he was taken ill, and how he went to his cousin at Kirkley-hall, who let him blood, which was the cause of his death. Tune of *Robin Hood's last farewell, &c.*"

This very old and curious piece is preserved solely in the editions of "*Robin Hood's garland*," printed at York, (or such as have been taken from them,) where it is made to conclude with some foolish lines, (adopted from the London copy of the preceding ballad,) in order to introduce the epitaph. It is here given from a collation of two different copies, containing numerous variations.



WHEN Robin Hood and Little John,

Down a down, a down, a down,

Went o'er yon bank of broom,

Said Robin Hood to Little John,

We have shot for many a pound:

Hey down, a down, a down.

But I am not able to shoot one shot more,

My arrows will not flee;

But I have a cousin lives down below,

Please god, she will bleed me.

Now Robin is to fair Kirkley gone,

As fast as he can win;

But before he came there, as we do hear,

He was taken very ill.

And when that he came to fair Kirkley-hall,
He knock'd all at the ring,
But none was so ready as his cousin herself
For to let bold Robin in.

Will you please to sit down, cousin Robin, she said,
And drink some beer with me ?
“ No, I will neither eat nor drink,
Till I am blooded by thee.”

Well, I have a room, cousin Robin, she said,
Which you did never see,
And if you please to walk therein,
You blooded by me shall be.

She took him by the lilly-white hand,
And let him to a private room,
And there she blooded bold Robin Hood,
Whilst one drop of blood would run.

She blooded him in the vein of the arm,
And locked him up in the room ;
There did he bleed all the live-long day,
Untill the next day at noon.

He then bethought him of a casement door,
Thinking for to be gone,
He was so weak he could not leap,
Nor he could not get down.

He then bethought him of his bugle-horn,
Which hung low down to his knee ;
He set his horn unto his mouth,
And blew out weak blasts three.

Then Little John, when hearing him,
As he sat under the tree,
“ I fear my master is near dead,
He blows so wearily.”

Then Little John to fair Kirkley is gone,
As fast as he can dree ;
But when he came to Kirkley-hall,
He broke locks two or three :

Untill he came bold Robin to,
Then he fell on his knee ;
A boon, a boon, cries Little John,
Master, I beg of thee.

What is that boon, quoth Robin Hood,
Little John, thou begs of me ?
“ It is to burn fair Kirkley-hall,
And all their nunnery.”

Now nay, now nay, quoth Robin Hood,
That boon I'll not grant thee ;
I never 'hurt' woman in all my life,
Nor man in woman's company.

I never hurt fair maid in all my time,
Nor at my end shall it be ;
But give me my bent bow in my hand,
And a broad arrow I'll let flee ;
And where this arrow is taken up,
There shall my grave digg'd be.

Lay me a green sod under my head,
And another at my feet ;

And lay my bent bow by my side,
Which was my music sweet ;
And make my grave of gravel and green,
Which is most right and meet.

Let me have length and breadth enough,
With a green sod under my head ;
That they may say, when I am dead,
Here lies bold Robin Hood.

These words they readily promis'd him,
Which did bold Robin please :
And there they buried bold Robin Hood,
Near to the fair Kirkleys.





XXIX.

ROBIN HOOD AND THE MONK.

THIS singularly curious and excellent poem, which is probably the earliest extant on the subject, was first printed in the "Ancient Metrical Tales," edited by the Rev. C. H. Hartshorne, 8vo., 1829, from a MS. in the University Library, Cambridge, with which it has since been collated by Sir Frederick Madden. A few lines are unfortunately rendered illegible by damp; with the exception of a few fragments, it was unknown to Ritson.



N somer when the shawes be sheyne,
And leves be large and longe,
Hit is fulle mery in feyre foreste
To here the foulys song.

To se the dere draw to the dale,
And leve the hilles hee,
And shadow hem in the leves grene
Vndur the grene wode tre.

Hit befel on whitsontide,
Erly in a may mornynge,
The son vp fayre can shyne,
And the briddis mery can syng.

This is a mery mornynge, seid litulle Johne,
 Be hym that dyed on tre,
 A more mery man then I am one
 Lyves not in cristianté.

Pluk vp thi hert my dere mayster,
 Litulle Johne can sey,
 And thynk hit is a fulle fayre tyme
 In a mornynge of may.

Ze on thyngre greves me seid Robyne,
 And does my hert myche woo,
 That I may not so solem day
 To mas nor matyns goo.

Hit is a fourtnet and more, seyde hee,
 Syn I my sauour see;
 To day will I to Notyngham, seid Robyn,
 With the myght of mylde Mary.

Then spake Moche the mylner[s] sune,
 Euer more wel hym betyde,
 Take xii of thi wyght zemen
 Well weppynd be ther side.

Such on wolde thi selfe slon
 That xii dar not abyde,
 Off alle my mery men, seid Robyne,
 Be my feithe I wil non haue.

But litulle Johne shall beyre my bow,
 Til that me list to drawe

* * * * *

Thou shalle beyre 'thin own' seid litulle Jon,
Maister & I wil beyre myne,
And we wil shete a peny, seid litulle Jon,
Vnder the grene wode lyne.

I wil not shete a peny, seyde Robyn Hode,
In feith litulle Johne with thee,
For euer for on as thou shetes, seid Robyn,
In feith I holde the thre.

Thus shet thei forth these zemen too
Bothe at buske and brome,
Til litulle Johne wan of his maistre
Vs. to hose and shone.

A ferly strife fel them betwene
As they went bi the way;
Litull Johne seid he had won v schyllings,
And Robyn Hode seid schortly nay.

With that Robyn Hode lyed litul Jone,
And smote hym with his honde,
Litul John waxed wroth therwith,
And pulled out his bright bronde.

Were thou not my maister, said litulle Johne,
Thou shuldis by hit ful sore,
Get the a man where thou wilt Robyn,
For thou getes me no more.

Then Robyn goes to Notyngham
Hymselfe mornynge allone,
And Litulle Johne to mery Scherewode,
The pathes he knowe alkone.

Whan Robyn came to Notyngham,
Sertenly withoutene layne,
He prayed to god and myld Mary
To bringe hym out saue agayne.

He gos into seynt Mary[s] chirche,
And knelyd downe before the rode,
All that euer were the church within
Beheld wel Robyne Hode.

Beside hym stode a gret hedid munke,
I pray to god woo he be,
Ful sone he knew gode Robyn [Hode]
As sone as he hym se.

Out at the durre he ran
Ful sone and anon,
Alle the zatis of Notyngham
He made to be sparred euerychone.

Rise vp, he seid, thou prowde schereff,
Buske the and make the bowne,
I haue spyed the kynges felone,
For sothe he is in this towne.

I haue spyed the false felone
As he stondes at his masse,
Hit is longe of the seide the munke,
And euer he fro vs passe.

This traytur[s] name is Robyn Hode,
Vndur the grene wode lynde
He robbyt me onys of a c pound,
Hit shalle neuer out of my mynde.

Vp then rose this prowde schereff,
And zede towarde hym zare;
Many was the modur son
To the kyrk with hym can fare.

In at the dures thei throlly thrast
With staves ful gode 'ilkone'
Alas, alas, seid Robin Hode,
Now mysse I litulle Johne.

But Robyne toke out a too-hond sworde
That hangit down be his kne,
Ther as the schereff and his men stode thyckust,
Thidurward wold he.

Thryes thorow at them he ran,
Ther for sothe as I yow say,
And woundyt many a modur sone,
And xii he slew that day.

Hys sworde vpon the schireff hed
Sertanly he brake in too,
The smyth that the made, seid Robyn,
I pray god wyrke him woo.

For now am I weppynlesse, seid Robyne,
Alasse agayn my wylle;
But if I may fle these traytors fro,
I wot thei wil me kille.

Robyn's men to the churche ran
Throout hem euer ilkon,
Sum fel in swonyng as thei were dede,
And lay still as any stone.

* * * * *
 * * * * *
 Non of theym were in her mynde
 But only litulle Jon.

Let be your rule, seid litulle Jon,
 For his luf that dyed on tre,
 Ze that shulde be duzty men
 Hit is gret shame to se.

Oure maister has bene hard bystode,
 And zet scapyd away,
 Pluk up your hertes and leve this mone,
 And herkyn what I shal say.

He has serued our ladie many a day,
 And zet wil securly,
 Therfore I trust in her specialy
 No wycked deth shal he dye.

Therfor be glad, seid litul Johne,
 And let this mourning be,
 And I shall be the munkes gyde
 With the myght of mylde Mary.

And I mete hym, seid litull Johne,
 We will go but we too
 * * * * *
 * * * * *

Loke that ze kepe wel our tristil tre
 Vndur the levys smale,
 And spare non of this venyson
 That gose in thys vale.

Forthe thei went these zemen too,
Litul Johne and Moche onfere,
And lokid on Moche emys hows
The hyeway lay fulle nere.

Litul John stode at a window in the mornynge,
And lokid forth at a stage,
He was war wher the munke came ridynge,
And wyth hym a litul page.

Be my feith, seid litul Johne to Moche,
I can the tel tithyngus gode;
I se wher the munk comys rydyng,
I know hym be hys wyde hode.

Thei went into the way these zemen bothe,
As curtes men and hende,
Thei spyrrred tithyngus at the munke
As thei hade bene his frende.

Fro whens comes ze, seid litul Johne,
Tel vs tithyngus I yow pray .
Off a false owtlay (called Robyn Hode)
Was takyn zisturday.

He robbyt me and my felowes bothe
Of xx marke in serten,
If that false owtlay be takyn,
For sothe we wolde be fayne.

So did he me, said the munke,
Of a c pound and more;
I layde furst hande hym apon,
Ze may thonke me therfore.

I pray god thanke yow, seid litulle Johne,
And we wil when we may,
We wil go with yow with your leve,
And brynge yow on your way.

For Robyn Hode hase many a wilde felow,
I telle yow in certen,
If thei wist ze rode this way,
In feith ze shulde be slayn.

As thei went talkyng be the way,
The munke and litulle Johne,
Johne toke the munkes horse be the hede
Ful sone and anon.

Johne toke the munkes horse be the hed,
For sothe as I yow say,
So did Muche the litulle page,
For he shulde not stirre away.

Be the golett of the hode
Johne pulled the munke downe,
Johne was nothyng of him agast,
He lete hym falle on his crowne.

Litulle Johne was 'sore' agrevyd,
And drew out his swerde in hye,
The munke saw he shulde be ded,
Lowd mercy can he crye.

He was my maister, said litulle Johne,
That thou hase browzt in bale,
Shalle thou neuer cum at oure kyng
For to telle hym tale.

John smote of the munkes hed,
 No longer wolde he dwelle,
 So did Moche, the litulle page,
 For ferd lest he wold tell.

Ther thei beryed hem both
 In nouther mosse nor lynge,
 And litulle Johne and Muche infero
 Bare the letters to oure kyng.

* * * *

He kneled down vpon his kne,
 God zow saue my lege lorde,
 Jesus yow saue and se.

God yow saue my lege kyng,
 To speke Johne was fulle bolde;
 He gaf hym the letturs in his hond,
 The kynge did hit unfold.

The kynge red the letturs anon,
 And seid so mot I the,
 Ther was neuer zoman in mery Ingland
 I longut so sore to see.

Wher is the munke that these shuld haue browzt,
 Oure kynge gan say,
 Be my trouthe, seid litull Jone,
 He dyed aftur the way.

The kyng gaf Moche and litul Jon
 xx pound in sertan,
 And made theim zemen of the crowne,
 And bade them go agayne.

U

He gaf Johne the seel in hand,
The scheref for to bere,
To brynge Robyn hym to,
And no man do hym dere.

Johne toke his leve at oure kyng,
The sothe as I yow say;
The next way to Notyngham
To take he zede the way.

When Johne came to Notyngham
The zatis were sparred ychone,
Johne callid vp the porter,
He answerid sone anon.

What is the cause, seid litul John,
Thou sparris the zates so fast?
Because of Robyn Hode, seid [the] porter,
In depe prison is cast.

Johne, and Moche, and Wylle Scathlok,
For sothe as I yow say,
Thir slew oure men vpon oure wallis,
And sawtene vs euery day.

Litulle Johne spyrrred aftur the schereff,
And sone he hym fonde,
He oppyned the kyngus priue seelle,
And gaf hym in his honde.

Whan the schereff saw the kyngus seelle
He did of his hode anon,
Wher is the munke that bare the letturs?
He seid to litulle Johne.

He is so fayn of hym, seid litulle Johne,
For sothe as I yow sey;
He has made hym abot of Westmynster,
A lorde of that abbay.

The scheref made John gode chere,
And gaf hym wine of the best;
At nyzt thei went to her bedde,
And euery man to his rest.

When the scheref was on-slepe
Dronken of wine and ale,
Litul Johne and Moche for sothe
Toke the way vnto the gale;

Litul Johne callid vp the jayler,
And bade hym rise anon;
He seid Robyn Hode had brokyn preson,
And out of hit was gon.

The portere rose anon sertan,
As sone as he herd John calle;
Litul Johne was redy with a swerd,
And bare hym to the walle.

Now will I be porter, seid litul Johne,
And take the keyes in honde;
He toke the way to Robyn Hode,
And sone he hym vnbonde.

He gaf hym a gode swerde in his hond,
His hed [ther-] with for to kepe,
And ther as the walle was lowyst
Anon downe can thei lepe.

Be that the cok began to crow,
The day began to sprynge,
The scheref fond the jaylier ded,
The comyn belle made he ryng.

He made a crye thoroowt al the tow[n],
Whedur he be zoman or knave,
That cowthe brynge hym Robyn Hode,
His warisone he shuld haue.

For I dar neuer, said the scheref,
Cum before oure kynge;
For if I do I wot serten,
For sothe he wil me henge.

The scheref made to seke Notyngham,
Bothe be strete and stye,
And Robyn was in mery Scherwode
As lizt as lef on lynde.

The bespake gode litulle Johne,
To Robyn Hode can he say,
I haue done the a gode turne for an euylle,
Quyte 'me' when thou may.

I haue done the a gode turne, said litulle Johne,
For sothe as I you saie,
I haue brouzt the vnder [the] grene wode lyne,
Fare wel, and haue gode day.

Nay be my trouthe, seid Robyn Hode,
So shalle hit neuer be,
I make the maister, seid Robyn Hode,
Off alle my men and me.

Nay be my trouthe, seid litulle Johne,
So shall hit neuer be,
But let me be a felow, seid litulle John,
No nodur kepe I'll be.

Thus Johne gate Robyn Hode out of prisone
Sertan withoutyn layne,
When his men saw hym hol and sounde
For sothe they were ful fayne.

They filled in wyne, and made him glad
Vndur the levys smale,
And zete pastes of venysone
That gode was 'withal.'

Than worde camé to oure kynge,
How Robyn Hode was gone,
And how the scheref of Notyngham
Durst neuer loke hyme vpone.

Then bespake oure cumly kynge,
In an angur hye,
Litulle Johne hase begyled the schereff,
In faith so hase he me.

Litulle Johne has begyled vs bothe,
And that fulle wel I se,
Or ellis the schereff of Notyngham
Hye hongut shuld he be.

I made hem zemen of the crowne,
And gaf hem fee with my hond,
I gaf hem grithe, seid oure kyng,
Thorowout alle mery Ingland.

I gaf hem grithe, then seide oure kyng,
I say, so mot I the,
For sothe soche a zeman as he is on
In alle Ingland ar not thre.

He is trew to his maister, seide oure kyng,
I sey, be swete seynt Johne,
He louys bettur Robyn Hode,
Then he dose vs ychone.

Robyn Hode is euer bond to him,
Bothe in strete and stalle,
Speke no 'more' of this matter, seid oure kyng,
But John has begyled vs alle.

Thus endys the talkyng of the munke,
And Robyne Hode I wysse;
God, that is euer a crowned kyng,
Bryng vs alle to his blisse.





XXX.

A FREEMAN'S SONG,

FOR THREE VOICES.

THIS strange and whimsical performance is taken from a very rare and curious publication, intitl'd "Deuteromelia: or the second part of musicks melodie, or melodious musicke. Of pleasant roundelaies; K. H. mirth, or freemens songs. And such delightful catches. London: printed for Thomas Adams dwelling in Paules church-yard at the signe of the white lion. 1609." 4to. *Freemen's songs* is supposed to be a corruption of *Three men's songs*, from their being generally for three voices. *K. H.* is *King Henry's*. See "Ancient songs," 1829, Vol. I. p. lxxix. and Vol. II. p. 54, &c.

In the collection of old printed ballads made by Anthony à Wood is an accurate copy of this ancient and singular production, in his own hand writing: "This song," says he, "was esteemed an old song before the rebellion broke out in 1641."



Y Lands-dale hey ho,
By mery Lands-dale hey ho,
There dwelt a jolly miller,
And a very good old man was he, hey ho.

He had, he had and a sonne a,
Men called him Renold,
And mickle of his might
Was he, was he, hey ho.

And from his father a wode a,
His fortune for to seeke,

From mery Landsdale
Wode he, wode he, hey ho.

His father would him seeke a,
And found him fast asleepe.
Among the leues greene
Was he, was he, hey ho.

He tooke, he tooke him up a,
All by the lilly-white hand,
And set him on his feet,
And bad him stand, hey ho.

He gave to him a benbow,
Made all of a trusty tree,
And arrowes in his hand,
And bad him let them flee.

And shoote was that that a did a,
Some say he shot a mile,
But halfe a mile and more
Was it, was it, hey ho.

And at the halfe miles end [a],
There stood an armed man;
The childe he shot him through,
And through, and through, hey 'ho.'

His beard was all on a white a,
As white as whaleis bone,
His eyes they were as cleare
As christall stone, hey ho.

And there of him they made [a]
Good yeoman Robin Hood,
Scarlet, and Little John,
And Little John, hey ho.



XXXI.

HEY JOLLY ROBIN.

THESE stanzas are supplied by "A musicall dreame, or the fourth booke of ayres, &c. Composed by Robert Iones. London, Imprinted by the assignees of William Barley, and are to be solde in Powles church-yard, at the signe of the Crowne. 1609." fo. The music, a composition of little merit or curiosity for the present age, was not transcribed.

IN Sherwood livde stout Robin Hood,
An archer great, none greater;
His bow and shafts were sure and good,
Yet Cupid's were much beter.

Robin could shoot at many a hart and misse,
Cupid at first could hit a hart of his.

Hey jolly Robin, hoe jolly Robin, hey jolly
Robin Hood,

Love finds out me, as well as thee, to follow
mee, to follow me to the green wood.

A noble theife was Robin Hoode,
Wise was he could deceive him,
Yet Marrian, in his bravest mood,
Could of his heart bereave him.

No greater thief lies hidden under skies
Then beauty closely lodgde in women's eyes.
Hey jolly Robin.

An out-law was this Robin Hood,
His life free and unruly ;
Yet to faire Marrian bound he stood,
And love's debt payed her duely.
Whom curbe of strickest law could not hold in
Love with obeyednes and a winke could winne.
Hey jolly Robin.

Now wend we home, stout Robin Hood,
Leave we the woods behind us ;
Love-passions must not be withstood,
Love every where will find us.
I livde in fælde and towne, and so did he,
I got me to the woods, Love followed me.
Hey jolly Robin.





XXXII.

ROBIN HOOD RESCUING THE THREE
SQUIRES FROM NOTTINGHAM
GALLOWS.

THIS song, and its tune, as the editor is informed by his ingenious friend Edward Williams, the Welsh bard, are well known in South Wales, by the name of *Marchog glas*, i. e. Green knight. Though apparently ancient, it is not known to exist in black letter, nor has any better authority been met with than the common collection of Aldermay church-yard.



OLD Robin Hood ranging the forrest all
round,

The forrest all round ranged he ;

O there did he meet with a gay lady,

She came weeping along the highway.

Why weep you, why weep you ? bold Robin he said,

What weep you for gold or fee ?

Or do you weep for your maidenhead,

That is taken from your body ?

I weep not for gold, the lady reply'd,

Neither do I weep for fee ;

Nor do I weep for my maidenhead,

That is taken from my body.

What weep you for then ? said jolly Robin,
I prithee come tell unto me.
“ Oh ! I do weep for my three sons,
For they are all condemned to die.”

What church have they robbed ? said jolly Robin,
Or parish-priest have they slain ?
What maids have they forced against their will ?
Or with other men's wives have lain ?

No church have they robbed, this lady reply'd,
Nor parish-priest have they slain ;
No maids have they forced against their will,
Nor with other men's wives have lain.

What have they done then ? said jolly Robin,
Come tell me most speedily.
“ Oh ! it is for killing the king's fallow deer,
'That' they are all condemned to die.”

Get you home, get you home, said jolly Robin,
Get you home most speedily,
And I will unto fair Nottingham go,
For the sake of the 'squires all three.

Then bold Robin Hood for Nottingham goes,
For Nottingham town goes he,
O there did he meet with a poor beggar-man,
He came creeping along the highway.

“ What news, what news, thou old beggar-man ?
What news, come tell unto me.”
“ O there's weeping and wailing in Nottingham [town],
For the death of the 'squires all three.”

This beggar-man had a coat on his back,
'Twas neither green, yellow, nor red ;
Bold Robin Hood thought 'twas no disgrace
To be in the beggar-man's stead.

“Come, pull off thy coat, thou old beggar-man,
And thou shalt put on mine ;
And forty good shillings I'll give thee to boot,
Besides brandy, good beer, ale and wine.”

Bold Robin Hood then unto Nottingham came,
Unto Nottingham town came he ;
O there did he meet with great master sheriff,
And likewise the 'squires all three.

One boon, one boon, says jolly Robin,
One boon I beg on my knee ;
That, as for the death of these three 'squires,
Their hangman I may be.

Soon granted, soon granted, says master sheriff,
Soon granted unto thee ;
And 'thou shalt' have all their gay cloathing,
Aye, and all their white monèy.

“Oh I will have none of their gay cloathing,
Nor none of their white monèy,
But I'll have three blasts on my bugle-horn,
That their souls to heaven may flee.”

‘Then’ Robin Hood mounted the gallows so high,
Where he blew loud and shrill,
’Till an hundred and ten of Robin Hood’s men
Came marching down the green hill.

Whose men are these? says master sheriff,

Whose men are they? tell unto me.

“O they are mine, but none of thine,
And are come for the 'squires all three.”

O take them, o take them, says great master sheriff,

O take them along with thee;

For there's never a man in fair Nottingham

Can do the like of thee.





XXXIII.

ROBIN HOOD'S DELIGHT.

DR. PEPUSCH, among other very curious articles of ancient English music, was possessed of a MS. folio, (supposed to be still extant,) which, at p. 15, contained a tune intitled "*Robin Hood.*" See Ward's "*Lives of the professors of Gresham college,*" 1740, (an interleaved copy, corrected and augmented by the author, in the British Museum). *Robene Hude* is likewise the name of a dance in Wedderburn's "*Complainte of Scotland,*" printed in 1549. The following tune is preserved by Oswald, in his "*Caledonian pocket companion.*"





XXXIV.

THE SONG OF ROBIN HOOD AND
HIS HUNTES-MEN.

THIS song is by Anthony Munday, and is taken from his "Metropolis coronata," a city pageant performed at the swearing in of Sir John Jolles, Knight, as Lord Mayor, Oct. 30, 1615.

NOW wend we together, my merry men all,
Unto the forrest side a :
And there to strike a buck or a doae,
Let our cunning all be tride a.

Then goe we merrily, merrily on,
To the green-wood to take up our stand [a],
Where we will lye in waite for our game,
With our best bowes all in our hand [a].

What life is there like to bold Robin Hood ?
It is so pleasant a thing a :
In merry Shirwood he spends his dayes,
As pleasantly as a king a.

No man may compare with bold Robin Hood,
With Robin Hood, Scathlocke and John [a] :
Their like was never, nor never will be,
If in case that they were gone [a].

They will not away from merry Shirwood,
In any place else to dwell [a]:
For there is neither city nor towne,
That likes them half so well [a].

Our lives are wholly given to hunt,
And haunt the merry greene-wood [a];
Where our best service is daily spent,
For our master Robin Hood [a].”





XXXV.

ROBIN HOOD AND THE TANNER'S
DAUGHTER.

THE following two ballads were discovered in 1836 by Mr. J. Payne Collier in a volume of MS. ballads, collected, as he conjectures, about the date of the Protectorate, and copied from printed originals, many of which are now lost, whilst others are yet preserved in public and private collections. They were first printed in Gutch's "Robin Hood," 1847.



S Robin Hood sat by a tree,
He espied a prettie may,
And when she chanced him to see,
She turnd her head away.

O feare me not, thou prettie mayde,
And doe not flie from mee,
I am the kindest man, he said,
That ever eye did see.

Then to her he did doffe his cap,
And to her lowted low,
To meete with thee I hold it good hap,
If thou wilt not say noe.

Then he put his hand around her waste,
Soe small, so tight, and trim,
And after sought her lip to taste,
And she to kissed him.

Where dost thou dwell, my prettie maide,
I prithee tell to mee ?
I am a tanner's daughter, she said,
John Hobbes of Barneslee.

And whither goest thou, pretty maide,
Shall I be thy true love ?
If thou art not afeard, she said,
My true love thou shalt prove.

What should I feare ? then he replied,
I am thy true love now :
I have two brethren, and their pride
Would scorn such one as thou.

That we will try, quoth Robin Hood,
I was not made their scorne ;
He shed my blood to doe the good,
As sure as they were borne.

My brothers are proude and fierce and strong.
I am, said he, the same,
And if they offer thee to wrong,
Theyle finde He play their game.

Thorough the free forrest I can run,
The King may not controll,
They are but barking tanner's sons,
To me they shall pay toll.

And if not mine be sheepe and kine,
I have cattle on my land,
On venison eche day I may dine,
Whiles they have none in hand.

These wordes had Robin Hood scarce spoke,
When they two men did see,
Come riding till their horses smoke ;
My brothers both, cried shee.

Each had a good sword by his side,
And furiouslye they rode
To where they Robin Hood espied,
That with the maiden stood.

Flee hence, flee hence, away with speede !
Cried she to Robin Hood,
For if thou stay thoult surely bleede,
I could not see thy blood.

With us, false maiden, come away,
And leave that outlawe bolde,
Why fledst thou from thy home this day,
And left thy father olde ?

Robin stept backe but spaces five,
Unto a sturdie tree,
He fight whiles I am left alive ;
Stay, thou sweete maide, with mee.

He stood before, she stooode behinde,
The brothers two drewe nie ;
Our sister now to us resign,
Or thou full sure shalt die.

Then cried the maide, my brethren deare,
With ye Ile freely wend,
But harm not this young forrester,
Noe ill doth he pretend.

Stand up, sweete maide, I plight my troth,
Fall thou not on thy knee ;
Ile force thy cruell brothers both,
To bend the knee to thee.

Stand thou behinde this sturdie oke,
I soone will quell their pride ;
Thoult see my sword with furie smoke,
And in their hearts' blood died.

He set his backe against a tree,
His foote against a stone ;
The first blow that he gave so free,
Cleft one man to the bone.

The tanners bold they fought right well,
And it was one to two ;
But Robin did them both refell,
All in the damsell's viewe.

The red blood ran from Robin's brow,
All downe unto his knee ;
O holde your handes, my brethren now,
I will goe backe with yee.

Stand backe, stand backe, my pretty maide,
Stand backe and let me fight ;
By sweete St. James be no afraide,
But I will it requite.

Then Robin did his sword uplift,
And let it fall againe,
The oldest brother's head it cleft,
Right through unto his braine.

O hold thy hand, bolde forrester,
Or ill may thee betide ;
Slay not my youngest brother here,
He is my father's pride.

Away, for I would scorne to owe,
My life to the, false maide !
The youngest cried, and aim'd a blow
That lit on Robin's head.

Then Robin leand against the tree,
His life nie gone did seeme ;
His eyes did swim, he could not see
The maiden start betweene.

It was not long ere Robin Hood
Could welde his sword so bright ;
Upon his feete he firmly stood,
And did renew the fight ;

Untill the tanner scarce could heave
His weapon in the aire ;
But Robin would not him bereave
Of life, and left him there.

Then to the greenewood did he fly,
And with him went the maide ;
For him she vovd that she would dye,
He'd live for her, he said.



XXXVI.

ROBIN HOOD AND THE PEDDLERS.



WILL you heare a tale of Robin Hood,
Will Scarlett, and Little John?
Now listen awhile, it will make you smile,
As before it hath many a one.

They were archers three, of hie degree,
As good as ever drewe bowe;
Their arrowes were long, and their armes were strong,
As most had cause to knowe.

But one sommer's day, as they toke their way
Through the forrest of greene Sherwood,
To kill the king's deare, you shall presently heare
What befell these archers good.

They were ware on the roade of three peddlers with
loade,
For each one had his packe,
Full of all wares for countrie faires,
Trust up upon his backe.

A good oke staffe, a yard and a halfe,
Each one had in his hande;
And they were all boune to Nottingham toun,
As you shall understand.

Yonder I see bolde peddlers three,
Said Robin to Scarlett and John;
Wele search their packes upon their backes
Before that they begone.

Holla, good fellowes! quod Robin Hood,
Whether is it ye doe goe;
Now stay and rest, for that is the best,
Tis well you should doe so.

Noe rest we neede, on our roade we speede,
Till to Nottingham we get.
Thou tellst a lowde lye, said Robin, for I
Can see that ye swinke and swet.

The peddlers three crosst over the lee,
They did not list to fight.
I charge ye taſſrie, quod Robin, for marry,
This is my owne land by right.

This is my mannor and this is my parke,
I would have ye for to knowe;
Ye are bolde outlawes, I see by cause
Ye are so prest to goe.

The peddlers three turned round to see,
Who it might be they herd;
Then again went on as they list to be gone,
And never answered word.

Then tooke Robin Hood an arrow so good,
Which he did never lacke,
And drewe his bowe, and the swift arrowe
Went through the last peddler's packe.

For him it was well on the packe it fell,
Or his life had found an end;
And it pierct the skin of his backe within,
Though the packe did stand his friend.

Then downe they flung their packes each one,
And stayde till Robin came.
Quod Robin, I saide ye had better stayde;
Good sooth, ye were to blame.

And who art thou? by S. Crispin, I vowe,
He quickly cracke thy head!
Cried Robin, come on, all three, or one;
It is not so soone done as said.

My name, by the roode, is Robin Hood;
And this is Scarlett and John;
It is three to three, ye may plainelie see,
See now, brave fellowes, laye on.

The first peddler's blowe brake Robin's bowe,
That he had in his hand;
And Scarlett and John, they eche had one
That they unneath could stand.

Now holde your handes, cride Robin Hood,
For ye have oken staves,
But tarie till wee can get but three,
And a fig for all your braves.

Of the peddlers the first, his name Kit o Thirske,
Said, we are well content ;
So eche tooke a stake for his weapon to make
The peddlers to repent.

Soe to it they fell, and their blowes did ring well
Upon the others' backes ;
And gave the peddlers cause to wish
They had not cast their packes.

Yet the peddlers 3 of their blowes were so free,
That Robin began for to rue ;
And Scarlett, and John, had such loades laide on,
It made the sunne looke blue.

At last Kit's oke caught Robin a stroke,
That made his head to sound ;
He staggerd, and reelde, till he fell on the field,
And the trees with him went round.

Now holde your handes, cride Little John,
And soe said Scarlett eke,
Our maister is slaine, I tell you plaine,
He never more will speake.

Now, heaven forefend he come to that end,
Said Kit, I love him well,
But let him learne to be wise in turne,
And not with poore peddlers mell.

In my packe, God wot, I a balsame have got,
That soone his hurts will heale ;
And into Robin Hood's gaping mouth
He presentlie powrde some deale.

Now fare ye well, tis best not to tell,
How ye three peddlers met ;
Or if that ye doe, prithee tell alsoe,
How they made ye swinke and swett.

Poor Robin in sound they left on the ground,
And hied them to Nottingham,
Whilst Scarlett, and John, Robin tended on,
Till at length his senses came.

No sooner, in haste, did Robin Hood taste
The balsame he had tane,
Than he gan to spewe, and up he threwe
The balsame all againe.

And Scarlett, and John, who were looking on
Their master as he did lie,
Had their faces besmeared, both eies and beard,
Therewith most piteouslie.

Thus ended that fray ; soe beware alwaye
How ye doe challenge foes ;
Looke well aboute they are not to stoute,
Or you may have worst of the blowes.





XXXVII.

THE BOLD PEDLAR AND ROBIN HOOD.

THIS ballad is taken from the volume of "Ancient Poems, Ballads, and Songs, of the Peasantry of England," by James Henry Dixon, Esq., forming one of the Publications of the Percy Society. Mr. Dixon says of it, "This ballad is of considerable antiquity; it appears to have escaped the notice of Ritson, Percy, and other collectors of Robin Hood Ballads."



HERE chanced to be a pedlar bold,
A pedlar bold he chanced to be;
He rolled his pack all on his back,
And he came tripping o'er the lee.
Doun, a doun, a doun, a doun.

By chance he met with two troublesome blades,
Two troublesome blades they chanced to be;
The one of them was bold Robin Hood,
And the other was Little John, so free.

Oh! pedlar, pedlar, what is in thy pack,
Come speedilie and tell to me?
I've several suits of the gay green silks,
And silken bow-strings two or three.

If you have several suits of the gay green silks,
And silken bow-strings two or three,
Then it's by my body, cries Little John,
One half your pack shall belong to me.

Oh! nay, Oh! nay, says the pedlar bold,
Oh! nay, Oh! nay, that can never be;
For there's never a man from fair Nottingham
Can take one half my pack from me.

Then the pedlar he pulled off his pack,
And put it a little below his knee,
Saying, if you do move me one perch from this,
My pack and all shall gang with thee.

Then Little John he drew his sword;
The pedlar by his pack did stand;
They fought until they both did sweat,
Till he cried, pedlar, pray hold your hand.

Then Robin Hood he was standing by,
And he did laugh most heartilie;
Saying, I could find a man of smaller scale,
Could thrash the pedlar and also thee.

Go you try, master, says Little John,
Go you try, master, most speedilie,
Or by my body, says Little John,
I am sure this night you will not know me.

Then Robin Hood he drew his sword,
And the pedlar by his pack did stand,
They fought till the blood in streams did flow,
Till he cried, pedlar, pray hold your hand!

Pedlar, pedlar, what is thy name?
Come speedilie and tell to me;
My name! my name I ne'er will tell,
Till both your names you have told to me.

The one of us is bold Robin Hood,
The other Little John so free:
Now, says the pedlar, it lays to my good will,
Whether my name I chuse to tell to thee.

I am Gamble Gold of the gay green woods,
And travell'd far beyond the sea
For killing a man in my father's land,
From my country I was forced to flee.

If you are Gamble Gold of the gay green woods,
And travell'd far beyond the sea,
You are my mother's own sister's son;
What nearer cousins then can we be?

They sheathed their swords with friendly words,
So merrilie they did agree,
They went to a tavern and there they dined,
And bottles cracked most merrilie.





XXXVIII.

THE BIRTH OF ROBIN HOOD.

THIS ballad occurs in the second volume of "Popular Ballads and Songs," published by Mr. Robert Jamieson in 1806. The editor there says of it, "It was taken down from the recitation of Mrs. Brown of Falkland, and is here given without the alteration of a single word. However little historical credit may be due to it, the account which it gives of the origin of the celebrated English outlaw, is certainly very characteristic, and perfectly consistent with his subsequent life and conduct."



WILLIE'S large o' limb and lith,
And come o' high degree;
And he is gone to earl Richard
To serve for meat and fee.

Earl Richard had but ae daughtèr,
Fair as a lilly flower;
And they made up their love-contract
Like proper paramour.

It fell upon a simmer's nicht,
Whan the leaves were fair and green,
That Willie met his gay ladie
Intil the wood alane.

“ O narrow is my gown, Willie,
That wont to be sae wide,
And gane is a’ my fair colour,
That wont to be my pride.

“ But gin my father should get word
What’s past between us twa,
Before that he should eat or drink,
He’d hang you o’er that wa’.

“ But ye’le come to my bower, Willie,
Just as the sun goes down ;
And kep me in your arms twa,
And latna me fa’ down.”

O whan the sun was nere gane down,
He’s doen him till her bower ;
And there by the lee licht o’ the moon,
Her window she lookit oer.

Intill a robe o’ red scarlet
She lap, fearless o’ harm,
And Willie was large o’ lith and limb,
And keepit her in his arm.

And they’ve gane to the gude green wood,
And ere the night was deen,
She’s borne to him a bonny young son,
Amang the leaves sae green.

Whan night was gane and day was come,
And the sun began to peep,
Up and raise the Earl Richard
Out o’ his drowsy sleep.

He's ca'd upon his merry young men,
By ane, by twa, and by three,
"O what's come o' my daughter dear,
That she's.nae come to me?

"I dreamt a dreary dream last night,
God grant it come to gude!
I dreamt I saw my daughter dear
Drown in the saut sea flood.

"But gin my daughter be dead or sick,
Or yet be stown awa,
I mak a vow, and I'll keep it true,
I'll hang ye ane and a!"

They sought her back, they sought her fore,
They sought her up and down;
They got her in the gude green wood
Nursing her bonny young son.

He took the bonny boy in his arms,
And kist him tenderlie;
Says, "though I would your father hang,
Your mother's dear to me."

He kist him o'er and o'er again;
"My grandson I thee claim;
And Robin Hood in gude green wood,
And that shall be your name."

And mony ane sings o' grass, o' grass,
And mony ane sings o' corn;
And mony ane sings o' Robin Hood,
Kens little whare he was born.

It was na in the ha', the ha',
Nor in the painted bower;
But it was in the gude green wood,
Amang the lilly flower.





GLOSSARY.



ANGELS, *pieces of gold coin, value 10s.*

Anker, *hermit, anchorite.*

Ar, *ere.*

Asay, Asayed, *essayed, tried, 'proved.*

A-sound, *in a swoon.*

Aunsetters, *ancestors.*

Avow, Avowe, *protestation, confession.*

Avowe, *maintain, verbum juris.*

Avowè, *founder, patron, protector.*

Awet, *wit, know.*

Awkwarde, *backward.*

Ayenst, *against.*

Baist, Baste, *basted, belaboured.*

Baith, *both.*

Bale, *mischief, woe, sorrow, misery.*

Banis, *bane, destruction.*

Bear, *moan, lamentation, outcry.*

Bearing, *arrow.*

Bedene, *behind, one after another?*

Bedyng, *bidding, asking.*

Begeck, *give them a begeck, play them a trick.*

Behote, *promised.*

Benbow, *a bent bow?*

Bescro, *beshrew.*

Bestad, ferre and friend bestad, *far from home and without a friend.*

Bestead, beset, put to it.

Beth, are, be.

Blate, sheepish or foolish, as we should now say.

Blive, believe, immediately.

Bloschems, blossoms.

Blyve, fast, quickly, briskly.

Bocking, pouring, flowing.

Bode, bidden, invited.

Bolt, Bolte, Boltes, Boltys, *an arrow of a particular kind, having a round or blunt head, used chiefly for shooting at birds.*

Boote, help.

Borde, table.

Borowe, Borrow, pledge, surety, bail.

Borowehode, suretyship.

Boskyd, busked, prepared, got ready.

Bottle, *a small vessel of wood or leather, in the shape of a cask, in which shepherds and others, employed abroad in the fields, carry or keep their drink.*

Bottys, butts.

Bou, bow.

Bound, betook, went.

Bowe, bough.

Bown, ready.

Boyt, both.

Breche, breeches.

Breyde, start, quick or hasty step.

Broke, brook, enjoy, use, keep.

Bronde, brand, sword.

Bushement, ambush.

Buske, go, betake, make ready.

- Bydene, *one after another*.
 Can, *did*.
 Carpe, *to speak*.
 Cankardly, *peevishly, with ill temper*.
 Capull hyde, *horse hide*.
 Carel, Carril, *carle, old fellow*.
 Caward, *awkward, or backward*.
 Cerstyn, *christian*.
 Chaffar, *chaffer, merchandise, commodity*.
 Chepe, *cheapen, buy*.
 Cheys, *choose*.
 Chorle, *churl, peasant, clown*.
 Cla'd, *scratched*.
 Clock, *cloak*.
 Clouted, *patched*.
 Come (*pronounced com*), *came*.
 Command, *warrant, authority*.
 Commytted, *accounted*.
 Cortessey, *courteous*.
 Cote a pye, *upper garment, short cloke*.
 Coud, *knew, understood*.
 Counsell, *kept secret*.
 Covent, *convent; whence our Covent-garden*.
 Cowed, *could, knew*. Cowed of curteyse, *understood good manners*.
 Crack, *boast*.
 Craftely, *skilfully*.
 Crouse, *brisk*.
 Cun, *con, owe, give*.
 Curteyse, *courteous*.
 Cutters, *sharking fellows, bravos*.
 Dead, *certain*.
 Demed, *judged*.
 Depart, *part, separate*.

Derne, *privy, secret.*

Deyell, *devil.*

Deythe, *dight, dressed.*

Donne, *dun.*

Doyt, *doth, do.*

Dree, *hye.*

Dreyffe, *drive.*

Dub, *shallow mirey pool.*

Dung, *beaten, overcome.*

Durk, *dagger.*

Dyght, *dressed, done.*

Dysgrate, *disgraced, degraded.*

Een, *eyes.*

Eftsones, *hereafter, afterward.*

Eild, *age.*

Ender, *under.*

Eylde, *yield.*

Eyr, *year.*

Eyre, *heir.*

Fail, but fail, *without fail, without doubt.*

Failyd, *wanted, missed.*

Fair, *fare, ado.*

Fare, *live.*

Farley, *fairly, plainly.*

Fay, *faith.*

Fayne, *glad.*

Fe, *fee, wages.*

Feardest, *fearfulest, most frightened or afraid.*

Feders, *feathers.*

Fende, *defend.*

Fered, *fared, lived.*

Ferre, *far.*

Fette, *fetched.*

Fetteled him, *made him ready, prepared himself.*

- Feyffe, *five*.
Finikin, *finical, fine, spruce*.
Flee, *fly*.
Flinders, *splinters*.
Fone, *foes*.
Force, Fors, *care*.
Forgone, *forego, lose*.
Forsoyt, *forsooth, truly*.
Foryete, *forgotten*.
Fostere, *forester*.
Fothe, *foot*.
Frae, *from*.
Frebore, *free-born, gentle*.
Frere, *friar*.
Fynly, *goodly*.
Gae, *go*.
Gan, gan they gone, *are they gone, did they go*.
Gang, Gange, *go*.
Gate, Gates, *ways, passes, paths, ridings*.
Geffe, *given*.
Ger, *gear, stuff, property*.
Gereamarsey. *See Gramercy*.
Gillore, *plenty*.
God, *good, goods, property*.
God-a-marsey, *God-a-mercy*.
Godys, *forbode*.
Gorney, *journey*.
Goy, *joy*.
Graff, oke graff, *oak branch or sapling*.
Gramercy, *thanks, or many thanks*.
Gree, *satisfaction*.
Gret, *greeted, saluted*.
Gripped, *grasped, laid hold of*.
Grome, *a common man*?

Hail, all hail, *wholely, entirely.*

Halds, holds, *holding-places, supports.*

Halke, *low ground by the side of a river?*

Halfendell, *half.*

Hals, *neck.*

Hambellet, *ambleth.*

Hansell, *gift, reward.*

Hart of Greece, *means, perhaps, no more than a fat hart, for the sake of a quibble between Greece and grease.*

Hawt, *aught, anything, something.*

Hayt, *hath.*

Held, *kept, preserved.*

Hende, *gentle, courteous.*

Hent, *took, caught.*

Hepe, *hip, haw, the fruit of the white thorn.*

Her, *their.*

Heynd, *gentle, courteous.*

Highed, *hyed, hastened.*

Hight, *called.*

Holde, *retained, of council.*

Holy, *wholely.*

Holy dame, *the Virgin Mary.*

Hos, Hus, *us.*

Hotys, *oats.*

Housband, Housbonde, *manager, husbandman, peasant.*

How, *hill.*

Howt, *out.*

Hyght, *vowed, promised.*

Hynde, *knave, servant.*

I, *ay.*

Ibent, *bent.*

Ibonde, *bound.*

- Ichaunged, *changed*.
Idyght, *dressed, prepared*.
Ifedered, *feathered*.
Ilke, *each*.
In-fere, *together*.
Inocked, *nocked, notched*.
Iquyt, *acquitted, set at liberty*.
Iswore, *sworn*.
Itake, *taken*.
Japes, *tricks*.
Ken, *know*.
Kest, *cast*.
Kirtle, *upper petticoat*.
Knave, *servant, man*.
Kod, *quod, quoth, said*.
Kyrte, *waistcoat*.
Kythe nor kin, *acquaintance nor kindred*.
Lappe, *wrap*.
Late, *lake, play, game?*
Launsgay, *a sort of lance*.
Leasyng, *lying, falsehood*.
Lede, *train, suite*.
Ledesman, *guide*.
Lee, *plain*.
Lefe, *willing*.
Lefte, *leave, left*.
Leftes, *leaves*.
Lende, *meet, encounter*.
Lene, *lend*.
Lere, *learn*.
Lere, *cheek*.
Lese, *lose*.
Let, *omit, hinder*.
Leugh, *laughed*.

Lever, *rather*.

Lewtè, *loyalty, faith, truth*.

Leythe, *light*.

Ligge, *lay*.

Lin, *stop, stay*.

Lithe, *attend, hear, hearken*.

Loffe, *love*.

Lore, *lost*.

Lough, Loughe, Low, *laughed*.

Lowe, *a little hill*.

Lown, *villain, knave, base fellow*.

Lyght, *light*.

Lynde, Lyne, *the lime or linden tree*.

Lyth. *See Lithe*.

Lyveray, *livery, habit, delivery: the mess, portion, or quantity of provisions delivered out at a time by the butler was called a livery*.

Masars, *cups, vessels*.

Masterye, *a trial of skill, high proof of skill*.

Mair, *more*.

Maney. *See Meynè*.

May, *maid*.

Meal, *oat-meal*.

Meal-poke, *meal bag, bag in which oat-meal is put*.

Mede, Meede, *reward*.

Medys, *midst, middle*.

Mesh, *a mash, or jelly*.

Met, Mete, *measured*.

Methe, *meat*.

Meynè, *attendants, retinue*.

Meythe, *might*.

Mister, *need*.

Mo, *more*.

Mot, Mote, *might, may*.

- Mote, *meeting, assembly, court, audit.*
 Mountenaunce, *amount, duration, space.*
 Mow, *mouth.*
 Mowe, *may.*
 Myrthes, *mirth, merriment.*
 Nane, *none.*
 Nar, *nor, than.*
 Ner, *ear.*
 Nobellys, *nobles, gold coin value 6s. 8d.*
 Nombres, Numbles, *entrails.*
 Okerer, *usurer.*
 Os, *us.*
 Outdone, *undone.*
 Owthe, *out.*
 Paid, *beat, beaten.*
 Palmer, *properly a pilgrim who had visited the holy-land; from the palm-branch or cross which he bore as a sign of such visitation.*
 Passe, *extent, bounds, limits, district.*
 Pauage, Pavag, Pavage, Pawage, *a toll or duty payable for the liberty of passing over the soil or territory of another.*
 Pay, *content, satisfaction, money.*
 Pinder. *The pinder is the pounder or pound-keeper; the petty officer of a manor, whose duty it is to impound all strange cattle straying upon the common, &c.*
 Polle, *pull.*
 Poke, *bag.*
 Preke, *prick, a piece of wood in the centre of the target.*
 Prese, *company.*
 Prest, *ready, ready to go.*
 Puding-pricks, *skewers that fasten the pudding-bag.*

Pyne, *pinning*.

Quequer, *quiver*.

Queyt, *quit, recompense*.

Quod, *quoth, says, said*.

Raked, *walked apace*.

Ray, battle-ray, *battle-array*.

Raye. . Cloth of ray *was cloth not coloured or dyed*.

Reachles, *careless, regardless, unobservant*.

Red, *clear*.

Reuth, *pity, compassion*.

Reve, *take by force*.

Reves, *bailiffs, receivers*.

Ripe, *cleanse*.

Rod. *A rod is usually sixteen feet and a half, but in Sherwood forest (according to Blount) it is 21 feet, the foot there being 18 inches.*

Rode, rood, *cross*.

Rung, *staff*.

Ryghtwys, *righteous, just*.

Sack, *a kind of Spanish wine*.

Sair, *sore*.

Salved, (salued?) *saluted*.

Scathe, *harm*.

Schetyng, *shooting*.

Schomer, *summer*.

Sclo, *slay*.

Scop, *scalp, pate*.

Scoper, *supper*.

Screfe, Screfie, *sheriff*.

Seche, *seek*.

See, *regard, protect*.

Seker, *sure*.

Selerer, *the officer who furnished the convent with provisions*.

Semblaunte, *semblance, appearance.*

Sene, *see.*

Sette, *mortgaged.*

Shawe, *shade.*

Shende, *hurt, annoy.* Shente, *hurt, wounded.*

Shet, *shut.*

Shete, *shoot.*

Shone, *shoes.*

Shope, *shaped, made.*

Shrewde, Shrewed, *unlucky.*

Shrift, *confession.*

Shroggs, *shrubs, thorns, briars.*

Shyt, *shut.*

Skaith, *hurt, harm.*

Slack, *low ground.*

Slade, *a slip of greensward between plow-lands, or woods.*

Slawe, Slone, *slain.*

Sle, Sloo, *slay.*

Somers, *sumpter-horses.*

Sorowe, *sorry.*

Sothe, *sooth, truth.*

Sound. *See A-sound.*

Soyt, *sooth, truth.*

Spear, *ask.*

Stalward, Stalworthe, *stout, well made.*

Stane, *stone.*

Stark, *stiff.*

Stede, *time.*

Steven, *chance.*

Stime, *spark, particle or ray of light.*

Stint, *stop.*

Sto', *store.*

Strang, *strong.*

Sweaven, *dream*.

Syne, *after, afterward, then*.

Syth, *afterward*.

Takles, *arrows*.

Takyll, *arrow*.

Tene, *grief, sorrow, distress, vexation*.

Tene, *grieve*.

The, *thrive, prosper*.

Thes, *thus, this*.

Thos, *thus*.

Throwe, *space*.

To-broke, *broken*.

To-hande staffe, *two-hand staff, quarter-staff*.

Tortyll, *wreathed, twined, twirled, twisted*.

Tray, *anger*.

Tree, *staff*.

Treyffe, *thrive*.

Trow, *true*.

Trowet, *troth*.

True, *throw, believe*.

Tynde, *tyndes, tines, antlers*.

Unketh, *uncouth, strange*.

Unneth, *scarcely*.

Up-chaunce, *by chance*.

Venie, *vein*.

Wan, *wonnynge wan, dwelling-place*.

Wan, *got*.

Warden-pies. *Wardens are a species of large pears.*

Warse, *worse*.

Was, *wash*.

Watchman, *a probable mistake for Waithman, outlaw*.

Wed, Wedde, *pawn, pledge, or deposit*.

Wed, Wende, *go, hye*.

Weele, *well*.

- Welt, *welded*.
Wenest, *thinkest*.
Wenion, Waniant, *now corrupted to a vengeance*.
Went, *wended, gone*.
Werschep, *worshiped, revered, respected*.
West, *wist, known*.
Wete, *know*.
Whang, *thong or string*.
Whereas, *where*.
Whute, *whistle*.
Wigger, *wicker*.
Wight, Wighty, *strong*.
Wilfulle, *doubtful*.
Win. *See Wen*.
Win, *get*.
Wist, *wis, trow, believe*.
Wode, *mad*.
Wolwarde, *wearing a flanel shirt, by way of penance*.
Won, *dwell*.
Wonest, *dweldest*.
Woodweele, *the golden ouzle, a bird of the thrush kind*.
Worthe, Wo worthe the, *Woe be to thee*.
Wrack, *ruin, destruction*.
Wroken, *wreaked, revenged*.
Wyght, *strong, stout*.
Wynne, *go*.
Wys, *trow*.
Wyte, Wytte, *know*.
Yede, Yeed, *went*,
Yeff, *if*.
Yeffell, *evil*.
Yeft, *gift*.
Yemenry, *yeomanry*.
Yend, *yon*.

Yeomandree, Yeomandry, *yeomanry, followers.*

Yerdes, *rods.*

Yever, *ever.*

Yfere, *together.*

Ylke, *same.*

Ynowe, *enough.*

Yode, *went.*

Yole, *Christmas.*

Yonder, *under.*

Yong men, *yeomen.*

FINIS.

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